A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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OCTOBER REVOLUTION—70 YEARS.
REPORT BY MIKHAIL GORBACHEV

ПАВШИМ В БОРЬБЕ
ЗА МИР И БРАТСТВО НАРОДОВ

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

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CONTENTS

2
MIKHAIL GORBACHEV: "THE SHINING HOUR OF MANKIND"

19
Igor Dedkov. **THAT UNTARNISHING WORD, REVOLUTION**

20
"I WELCOME THE NEW THINKING."
A talk with Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, U.N. Secretary-General

21
Observer's view
Alexander Pumpyansky. **ARCHIMEDE'S LEVER**

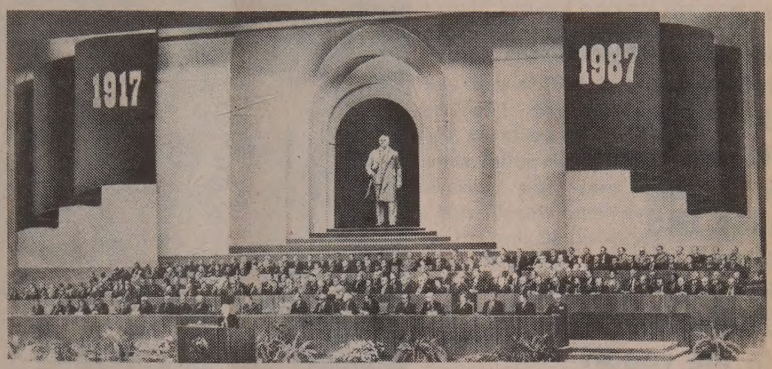
22
Pages from the history of the October Revolution
Anastasia Kartunova. **THE RED ARMY MAN SANG FUYANG**

24
Religion
A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE CHURCHES. Metropolitan Filaret on his meeting with the representatives of the Vatican

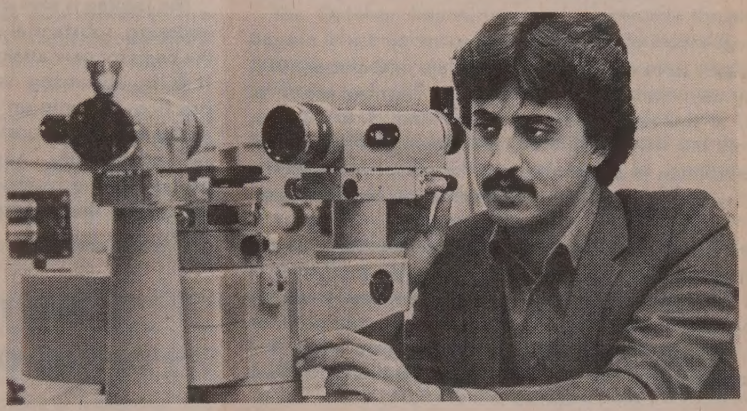
26
China
Grigory Arslanov. **AFTER LONG WINTER COMES SPRING**

28
Exclusive for New Times
"IDEOLOGICAL DISPUTES AND MUTUAL SECURITY."
Otto Reinhold, a member of the SUPG Central Committee, comments on the joint SUPG-SPD document

31
Afghanistan
Alexander Usvatov. **OBSTACLES TO RECONCILIATION**



Report by CC CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev at the Joint Meeting of the CPSU Central Committee, the U.S.S.R. and the R.S.F.S.R. Supreme Soviets on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of the Great October Socialist Revolution.



Mir Muhammad Nasir, one of the many Afghan students studying at Tajik University.

The sports complex of Shanghai University.

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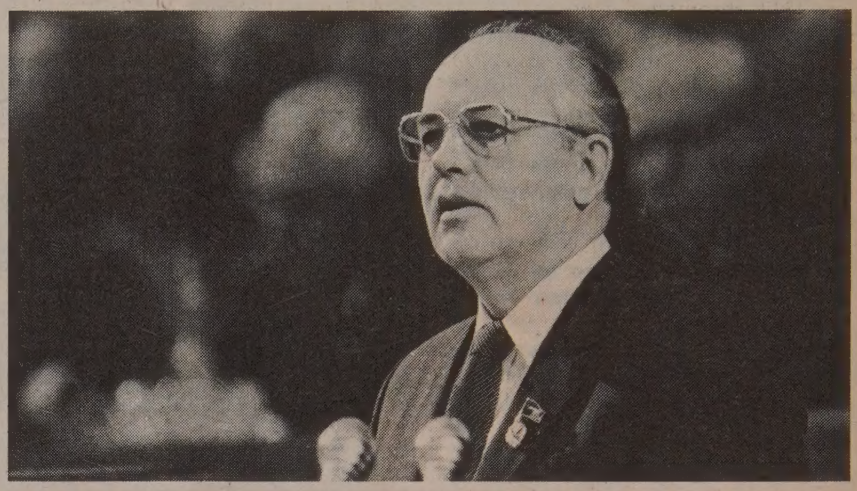
MIKHAIL GORBACHEV:

"THE SHINING HOUR OF MANKIND"

"The October Revolution is truly the shining hour of mankind, its radiant dawn. The October Revolution is a revolution of the people and for the people, for every individual, for his emancipation and development," CPSU General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev stressed in the report "The October and Perestroika: The Revolution Continues."



Dear comrades,

Dear foreign guests,

It is seventy years since the unforgettable days of October 1917, those legendary days that started the count of the new epoch of social progress, of the real history of humankind. The October Revolution is truly the shining hour of mankind, its radiant dawn. The October Revolution is a revolution of the people and for the people, for every individual, for his emancipation and development.

Seventy years is not a long time in world civilization's ascent over the centuries, but history has known no other period like it for the scale of the achievements that our country has scored since the victory of the October Revolution. There is no greater honour than to be pioneers, to apply one's strength, energies, knowledge, and ability to the ultimate triumph of the October Revolution's ideas and goals.

The jubilee is a moment of pride. We emerged from acid tests that fell to our lot with flying colours. We did not simply hold out, but wrested the country from economic dislocation and backwardness, and made it a mighty power, transforming life and changing man's inner world beyond recognition. In the cruellest battles of the 20th century we safeguarded the right to our own way of life, and defended our future. We have legitimate grounds to take pride in the fact that our revolution, our labour and struggle, are continuing to exercise a most profound influence on all aspects of world affairs - politics and the economy, the social sphere, and the thinking of our contemporaries.

The jubilee is a moment of recollection. Of those millions of people who have each contributed to our common socialist gains. Of those who smelted steel, grew crops, taught children, promoted scientific and technological progress, and attained the summits of art. And painful recollection of those who fell in battle defending the country, and enabled our society to advance at the price of their lives. It is a moment of unfading memory of what we have lived through, of the path we have traversed, because it was all this that created the present day.

The jubilee is a moment of reflection. On how thorny our road was. There were heroic feats and tragedy, great victories and bitter failures. We reflect on the seventy years of intense construction from the angle of the people ready to muster all their strength and socialism's enormous potential for the revolutionary transofmation of life.

The jubilee is also a glance into the future. Our achievements are imposing, substantial and significant. They are a lasting foundation, the basis for new attainments and for society's further development. It is in advancing socialism and in developing the ideas and practices of Leninism and the October Revolution that we see the substance of our present-day work and concerns, our prime task, and moral duty. And that necessitates serious and thorough analysis of the historic significance of the October Revolution, of everything that has been done in these seventy postrevolutionary years.

I. THE TRAILBLAZING PATH OF THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION

Comrades, our trailblazing road has been long and difficult. No brief analysis can encompass it. There was the burden of the material and moral legacy of the old world, World War I, the Civil War, and the intervention. There was the novelty of change and the related hopes of people, the rate and scale of the invasion of the new and unusual, leaving us no time to look back and think. There were subjective factors, which play a special part in revolutionary storms. There were notions of the future, often simplistic and straightforward, and shot through with the maximalism of revolutionary times. And there was the pure, ardent striving of the fighters for a new life to accomplish things as quickly, as well, and in the fairest way possible.

The past - its heroism and drama - cannot leave our contemporaries indifferent. We have only one history and it is irreversible. Whatever emotions it may evoke, it is our history, and we cherish it. Today we turn to those October days that shook the world. We look for and find in them both a dependable spiritual buttress and instructive lessons. We see again and again that the socialist option of the October Revolution has been correct.

The objective logic of mankind's historic progress had led up to that turning point. For all the contradictions and multiplicity of civilization's ascendant advance, the October Revolution was a natural result of the evolution of the ideas and the toiling people's struggle over the centuries for freedom and peace, for social justice, and against class, national, and spiritual oppression.

The year 1917 showed that the choice between socialism and capitalism is the main social alternative of our epoch, that in the 20th century progress presupposes advance to socialism, a higher form of social organization. This fundamental conclusion is no less relevant today than when it was first drawn by Lenin. Such is the logic of society's progressive development.

The Revolution in Russia has become, as it were, the acme of the liberative aspirations, the living embodiment of the dreams of the world's finest minds - from the great humanists of the distant past to the proletarian revolutionaries of the 19th and 20th centuries. The year 1917 absorbed the energy of the people's struggle for development without outside interference, and independence, of the progressive national movements, and the peasant risings and wars against serfdom abounding in our history. It embodied the spiritual quest of the 18th-century enlighteners, the heroes and martyrs of the Decembrist movement, the ardent tribunes of revolutionary democracy, and the moral dedication of the eminent men of our culture.

Crucial for the future of our country was the time when at the dawn of the 20th century, Vladimir Ilyich Lenin headed a close-knit group of like-minded people and set out to organize a proletarian party of the new type in Russia. It was this great Party of Lenin that roused the nation, its finest and most dedicated part, for an assault on the old world.

The cornerstone in the success of the October Revolution was laid by the First Russian Revolution of 1905-07. This includes the bitter lessons of the 9th of January, the desperate heroism displayed at the Moscow barricades in the December Uprising, the exploit of thousands of known and unknown freedom fighters, and the birth of the first workers' Soviets, the prototypes of Soviet power.

The victory of the October Revolution was also rooted in the gains of the February 1917 Revolution, the first victorious people's revolution in the imperialist epoch. Following the victory in February the revolution went forward with incredible speed. Its leading characters were the workers and peasants wearing soldiers' greatcoats. The spring of 1917 showed all the muscle of the people's movement. There also surfaced its limitations, the contradictions in the revolutionary consciousness of that stage, the power of historical inertia, with the result that for a time the exploiter classes departing r om the scene took advantage of the fruits of the people's victory.

The February Revolution provided the October Revolution with its main weapon - power organized in revived Soviets. The February Revolution had been the first experience of tangible democracy, of political education of the masses through practice - an experience acquired in the intricate conditions of a diarchy. The February Revolution was unique in that it provided an opportunity for power to be taken over peacefully by the working people - something which, regrettably, did not come about owing to historical circumstances. The February Revolution was a major historical landmark on the road to the October Revolution.

In the complicated interlacement and confrontation of the class forces that took part in the February Revolution, Lenin, with the insight of genius, saw opportunities arising for the victory of a socialist revolution. His April Theses were a scientific prevision and model of a revolutionary action programme in those historical conditions. Lenin revealed the logic of the bourgeois democratic revolution growing over into a socialist revolution as well as the form of that process - through the Soviets, through their bolshevization, whose essence was to help the people, the masses to understand the purpose of their own struggle, and to carry out the revolution consciously in their own interests. The road from the February to the October Revolution was a time of swift social change, a time of a rapid political enlightenment of the masses, of a consolidation of the revolutionary forces and their vanguard, the Party of Lenin.

At that time, between February and October, Lenin and his followers demonstrated the art of political guidance with extraordinary effect, giving instruction as it were in the living dialectic of revolutionary thought and action. The Party leadership showed its ability for collective creative quest, side-stepping stereotypes and slogans that had only yesterday, in a different situation, seemed incontestable as the only possible. It is safe to say that the very course of Lenin's thoughts, the activity of the Bolsheviks, marked by swift change of form and method, flexibility, unorthodox tactical solutions, by political audacity - all provided a vivid example of anti-dogmatic, truly dialectical, and therefore new, thinking. That and only that is how real Marxists-Leninists think and act, especially at times of change, at critical turning points, when the future of the revolution and peace, socialism and progress, is at stake.

Let's go back to April 1917: to many friends and foes Lenin's programme of setting out on socialist revolution seemed a utopia, something next to unbridled fantasy. But life has shown that only such a programme could and did become the political foundation for the further development of the revolution and, in substance, the basis for social salvation, for averting national catastrophe.

Let's recall the July days of 1917. It was a painful moment when the Party was compelled to give up the slogan of transferring all power to the Soviets. But there was no other choice, because the Soviets had, for a while, fallen into the hands of Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks, and were helpless in face of the counterrevolution. How keenly Lenin listened to the pulsebeat of the revolution, how brilliantly he discerned the beginning of a new revival of the Soviets which were becoming truly popular bodies in the process of struggle; this enabled them to become the organs of a victorious armed uprising, and then also the political form of worker-peasant power.

All those are not simply pages in the chronicle of the Great Revolution. They are also a constant reminder to us, those who are living today, of the lofty duty of Communists to always be in the van of events, to be able to take bold decisions, to assume full responsibility for the present and future.

The October Revolution was a powerful thrust of millions of people which encompassed the vital interests of the working class, the age-old aspirations of the peasantry, the peace aspirations of soldiers and sailors, and the unconquerable yearning of the peoples of multinational Russia for freedom and knowledge. The Bolshevik Party managed to find the crucial points in that intricate interlacement of diverse interests, to combine the various tendencies and aspirations, and gear them to settling the Revolution's main issue, that of power. And in its very first decrees, those on peace and land, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat responded to the imperative of the time with practical action and showed its understanding of the vital interests of the working class and, indeed, the absolute majority of the people.

Today, it is essential that we remember one more important, fundamental lesson of those October days. Highly relevant in our time is Lenin's reply to the question posed by life, by revolutionary realities - the question about the relationship of the theoretical "model" of the road to socialism and the actual practices of socialist construction. Marxism-Leninism is a creative doctrine, not a compendium of ready-made guidelines and doctrinaire prescriptions. The Marxist-Leninist doctrine, which is foreign to all sorts of dogmatism, secures vigorous interaction between innovative theory and practice, the very course of the revolutionary struggle. The October Revolution is a most instructive example thereof.

It will be recalled that many leaders of the working-class movement of those days, even eminent ones, did not see the October Socialist Revolution as an objective development: they held that it went against the rules, that it was contrary to the prevailing theoretical views. As they saw it, capitalism in Russia had not created all the requisite material and cultural preconditions for socialism by October 1917. It is instructive and useful, I think, to recall what Lenin replied to these critics of our Revolution: "You say that civilization is necessary for the building of socialism," he retorted. "Very good. But why could we not have first created such prerequisites of civilization in our country as the expulsion of the landowners and the Russian capitalists, and then start moving towards socialism?"

Those who treat Marxism dogmatically and pedantically cannot understand its main element: its revolutionary dialectic. This latter is the highlight of all of Lenin's post-revolution activity. It helped accomplish the political and moral exploit of the Brest Peace literally on the edge between the possible and impossible, saving

thousands upon thousands of lives and securing the very survival of the socialist Motherland.

And one more example. Like Marx and Engels, Lenin was convinced that the defence force of the Revolution would be a people's militia. But the concrete conditions prompted a different solution. The Civil War imposed on the people and foreign intervention called for a new approach. A Worker-Peasant Red Army was formed by Lenin's decree. It was an army of a new type which earned undying glory in the Civil War and in repulsing the foreign intervention.

Those years brought severe trials for the newly established Soviet power. Stark reality posed the crucial question of whether socialism would or would not be. The Party rallied the people to defend the socialist Motherland, the gains of the October Revolution. Hungry, ill-clad and ill-shod, the poorly armed Red Army men crushed a well-trained and well-armed counterrevolutionary host which was being generously supplied by imperialists of East and West. The Civil War rolled across the country like wildfire, involving every family and leaving in its wake dramatic changes in the habitual way of life, in human mentality, and in human destinies. The will of the people, the striving of millions towards a new life, won out in this deadly clash. The country did everything it could to help the newly established army; it lived and acted by Lenin's slogan: "Everything for victory."

We will never forget the exploit of those legendary heroes - gallant sailors and cavalrymen, men and commanders of the young Red Army, and the red partisans. They had safeguarded the Revolution and their glory is everlasting.

The decision to launch a new economic policy, which substantially widened the generally held views of socialism and the ways of building it, was imbued with profound revolutionary dialectics.

Or take the following issue. As you know, Lenin criticized the limitations of "cooperative socialism." Yet in the specific conditions that arose after the October Revolution when power was won by the people, Lenin saw it from a new angle. In his article, "On Cooperation," he worked out the idea of socialism being a society of "civilized cooperators."

Such was the power and boldness of Marxist dialectics, which expressed the essence of the revolutionary doctrine, and which Lenin had so brilliantly mastered. He said that in building the new world, "again and again we shall have to improve the work, redo it, start from the beginning."

Yes, we had to improve and redo things again and again, endure long and hard struggle, and go through historical processes of a crucial, revolutionary nature. And they in many ways changed the circumstances and conditions of our advance. They also changed us - they seasoned us, enriched us with experience and knowledge, and gave us still greater faith in the success of the revolurionary cause.

Assessing the path we have traversed in the light of world history, one sees again and again that we have accomplished in a short time what others took centuries to accomplish.

The socialist revolution occurred in a country with a medium-level development of capitalism, a highly concentrated industry, a predominantly peasant population, and deep-going survivals of feudalism and even of earlier social systems. Russia had given the world truly great achievements in science and culture, though three quarters of its population could neither read nor write. The country was ravaged to the extreme by imperialist World War I and incompetent government.

The building of the new life had no models to go by and required tireless search for constructive solutions.To the Communist Party aim was clear: revolution and the socialist road, and Soviet power. Lenin led the Party along that road.

Out of the tangled material of multi-structured Russia, the living creativity of the masses crystalled the principles and standards of the future socialist system and uprecedented forms of social organization. The notions, at first purely theoretical, about the forms of government by the people, the ways and limits of socializing property, the organization of socialist production, the initiation of a new, comradely discipline, and about the place and role of the individual in the new society, were clarified and filled with a real and tangible content.

The main purpose of the October Revolution was to build a new life. The process did not cease for a single day. Even a short respite was used to continue building and to look for ways leading to the socialist future.

The early twenties were highlighted by a spectacular upsurge of popular initiative and creativity. They were a truly revolutionary laboratory of social innovation, of search for the optimum forms of the alliance of workers and the working peasantry, and the shaping of a mechanism for meeting the whole spectrum of the working people's interests.

From organizing production and consumption by methods of war communism necessitated by war and dislocation, the Party went over to more flexible, economically justified, "regular" instruments of influencing the social reality. The measures of the new economic policy were geared to building socialism's material foundation.

These days, we turn ever more often to Lenin's last works, to his ideas as regards the new economic policy, in an attempt to extract from it all the valuable elements that we require today. Certainly, it would be a mistake to equate the new economic policy and what we are doing now at a fundamentally new level of development. Today, there are no owners of individual peasant farms, shaping an alliance with whom was vital for the economic policy of the twenties.

But the new economic policy was also projected farther into the future. The task had been set of building the new society "not directly relying on enthusiasm," as Lenin wrote, "but aided by the enthusiasm engendered by the great revolution, and on the basis of personal interests, personal incentives and business principles.... That is what experience, the objective course of the development of the revolution, has taught us."

Speaking of the creative potential of the new economic policy, we should evidently refer once more to the political and methodological wealth of ideas underlying the food tax. To be sure, we are not interested in those of its forms that had been meant to secure a bond between workers and peasants, but in the potentialities of the food tax idea in unfettering the creative energies of the masses, stimulating the initiative of the individual, and removing the bureaucratic trammels that limited the operation of socialism's basic principle, "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his work."

The socialist construction that was begun under Lenin's leadership yielded many fundamentally new elements.

Methods of planned economy were worked out and applied for the first time in world history. The General Plan for the Electrification of Russia was, indeed, a discovery, a milestone in the world's economic thinking and practice. It was not only an imposing electrification plan, but also a project, as conceived by Lenin, of a "harmonious coordination" of agriculture, industry and transport, or, in modern-day parlance, a comprehensive programme for the location and build-up of the country's productive forces. Lenin called it the second programme of the Party, "a plan of work aimed at restoring our entire economy and raising it to the level of up-to-date technical development."

A new culture was taking shape, absorbing both past experience and the wealth, audacity, and originality of talents, and involving striking personalities whom the Revolution had aroused and inspired to serve the people. Of everlasting significance for us, not only for its results but also for its experience and method, is the initial, Lenin stage of forming the multinational Soviet state.

When thinking of the time when "NEP Russia will become socialist Russia," Lenin could not, and never meant to, draw the picture of the future society in every detail. But the ways and means of advancing to socialism through the building of a machine industry, through a broad establishment of cooperatives, through the enlistment of the working masses to a man in running the state, through organizing the work of the state apparatus on the principle of "better fewer, but better" and through the cultural development of the entire people, through the consolidation of the federation of

free nations "without lies or bayonets" - this and this alone was to shape the face of the country as it attained a fundamentally new level of social order.

In Lenin's last works, which were extraordinarily rich intellectually and emotionally, there emerged a system of views and the very concept of socialist construction in our country. This is an immense theoretical asset for the Party.

Lenin's premature death was a terrible shock for the whole Party and the Soviet people. The grief was immeasurable, the loss irreparable. This was clear to everybody. Undertakings of colossal historical importance lay ahead. Without Lenin, relying on his doctrine and his behests, the Party leadership was to find the optimum solutions that would consolidate the gains of the Revolution and lead the country to socialism in the concrete conditions of the Soviet Russia of that time.

History set the new system a rigid ultimatum: either it would in the shortest possible time build its own socio-economic and technical basis and survive, giving the world the first example of a society of justice, or wilt away and remain in the memory of time at best as a heroic but unsuccessful social experiment. Vital and crucial significance, in the full sense of the word, was attached to the question of securing a swift rate of socialist change.

The period after Lenin, that is, the twenties and the thirties, occupied a special place in the history of the Soviet state. Radical social changes were carried out in some fifteen years. An incredible lot was squeezed into that period - both as regards search for optimum variants of socialist construction and what was really achieved in building the foundations of the new society. Those were years of hard work to the limits of human endurance, years of sharp and multifarious struggle. Industrialization, collectivization, the cultural revolution, strengthening of the multinational state, consolidation of the Soviet Union's international positions, new forms of managing the economy and all social affairs - all this occurred within that period. And all of it had far-reaching consequences.

For decades, we have been recurring to that time. This is natural. Because that was when the world's first socialist society had its beginnings, when its building was started. It was an exploit of worldwide, truly historic significance. Admiration for the exploits of our fathers and grandfathers, and the assessments of our real achievements will live forever, as will the exploits and achievements themselves. And if, at times, we scrutinize our history with a critical eye, we do so only because we want to obtain a better and fuller idea of the ways that lead to the future.

It is essential to assess the past with a sense of historical responsibility and on the basis of the historical truth. This has got to be done, first, because of the tremendous importance of that period for the destiny of our country, for the destiny of socialism. Second, because that period has for many years been the subject of debate both in our country and abroad, where, along with a search for the truth, attempts are often made to discredit socialism as a new social system, as a realistic alternative to capitalism. Lastly, we need truthful assessments of this and all the other periods of our history - especially now, with perestroika in full gear. We need them not to settle political scores or, as they say, to engage in self-flagellation, but to give its due to all the heroic that was in the past, and to draw lessons from mistakes and miscalculations.

Now, about the twenties and thirties after Lenin. Although the Party and society had Lenin's conception of building socialism and Lenin's works of the post-revolution period to go by, the search of the way was not at all simple; it was marked by acute ideological struggle and political debates on the basic problems of society's development, above all on the question of whether socialism could or could not be built in our country. Theory and practice were seeking the directions and forms socio-economic transformations should take, and for ways of accomplishing them on socialist lines in the concrete historical situation the Soviet Union was placed.

Practical constructive work that called for a high sense of responsibility was the order of the day. Above all, the country squarely faced the question of industrialization and economic reconstruction without which building socialism and strengthening the defence capability were unthinkable. This followed from Lenin's explicit directions, from his theoretical heritage. The question of socialist changes in the countryside, too, arose on the same plane and also according to Lenin's behests.

Thus, the question concerned large-scale and crucial matters, problems, and objectives. And though, I repeat, the Party had Lenin's guidelines on these issues, sharp debates erupted over them.

It is evidently worthwhile to say that both before and after the Revolution, in the first few years of socialist construction, not all Party leaders by far shared Lenin's views on some of the most important problems. Besides, Lenin's recommendations could not encompass all the concrete issues concerning the building of a new society. Analyzing the ideological disputes of those times, we should bear in mind that carrying out gigantic revolutionary transformations in a country such as Russia was then, was in itself a most difficult undertaking. Historically, the country was on the march, its development was being sharply accelerated, all aspects of social life were changing rapidly and profoundly.

Reflecting the entire range of the interests of classes, social groups and strata, the needs and objectives of the times, the historical traditions and the pressure of urgent tasks, and also the conditions of the hostile capitalist encirclement, the ideological struggle was indissolubly intertwined with events and processes in the economy, on the political scene, in all spheres of people's lives.

In short, it was supremely difficult to get one's bearings and find the only correct course in that intricate and stormy situation. To a considerable extent, too, the ideological struggle was complicated by personal rivalries in the Party leadership. The old differences that had existed back in Lenin's lifetime also made themselves felt in the new situation, and this in a very acute form. Lenin, as we know, had warned against this danger. In his "Letter to the Congress" he had stressed that "it is not a trifle, or it is a trifle which can assume decisive importance." And that was largely what had happened.

Their petty-bourgeois nature took the upper hand in the case of some authoritative leaders. They took a factional stance. This agitated the Party organizations, distracted them from vital affairs, and interfered in their work. The leaders in question continued to provoke a split even after the vast majority in the Party saw that their views were contrary to Lenin's ideas and plans, and that their proposals were erroneous and could push the country off the correct course.

This applies first of all to L.D. Trotsky, who had, after Lenin's death, displayed excessive claims to top leadership in the Party, thus fully confirming Lenin's opinion of him as an inordinately self-assured politician who always vacillated and cheated. Trotsky and the Trotskyites negated the possibility of building socialism in conditions of capitalist encirclement. In foreign policy they gave priority to export of revolution, and in home policy to tightening the screws on the peasants, to the city exploiting the countryside, and to administrative and military fiat in running society. Trotskyism was a political trend whose ideologists took cover behind leftist pseudo-revolutuonary rhetoric and in effect assumed a defeatist stance. This was essentially an attack on Leninism all down the line. The matter practically concerned the future of socialism in our country, the fate of the Revolution.

In the circumstances, it was essential to disprove Trotskyism before the whole people, and reveal its anti-socialist essence. The situation was complicated by the fact that the Trotskyites were acting in common with the New Opposition headed by Grigory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev. Being aware that they constituted a minority, the opposition leaders had again and again saddled the Party with discussions, counting on a split in its ranks. But in the final analysis, the Party spoke out for the line of the Central Committee and against the opposition, which was soon ideologically and organizationally crushed.

In short, the Party's leading nucleus headed by Joseph Stalin had safeguarded Leninism in an ideological struggle. It defined the strategy and tactics at the initial stage of socialist construction, with its political course being approved by most members of the Party

and most working people. An important part in defeating Trotskyism ideologically was played by Nikolai Bukharin, Felix Dzerzhinsky, Sergei Kirov, Grigory Ordjonikidze, Jan Rudzutak, and others.

At the very end of the twenties a sharp struggle ensued also over the ways of putting the peasantry on the socialist road. In substance, it revealed the different attitude of the majority of the Political Bureau and of the Bukharin group on how to apply the principles of the new economic policy at the new stage in the development of Soviet society.

The concrete conditions of that time - both at home and internationally - necessitated a considerable increase in the rate of socialist construction. Bukharin and his followers had, in their calculations and theoretical propositions, underrated the practical significance of the time factor in building socialism in the thirties. In many ways, their stance derived from dogmatic thinking and a non-dialectical assessment of the concrete situation. Bukharin himself and his followers soon admitted their mistakes.

In this connection, it is not amiss to recall Lenin's opinion of Bukharin. "Bukharin," he said, "is not only a most valuable and major theorist of the Party; he is also rightly considered the favourite of the whole Party, but his theoretical views can be classified as fully Marxist only with great reserve, for there is something scholastic about him (he has never made a study of dialectics, and, I think, never fully understood it)." The facts again confirmed that Lenin had been right.

As we see, the political debates of that time reflected a complicated process in the Party's development marked by acute struggle over crucial problems of socialist construction. In that struggle, which had to be endured, there took shape the concept of industrialization and collectivization.

Under the leadership of the Party, of its Central Committee, a heavy industry, including engineering, a defence industry and a chemical industry abreast of the times, were built in short order practically from scratch, and the General Electrification Plan was implemented. These achievements were symbolized by the Magnitogorsk Steel Works, the Kuznetsk coalfields, the Dnieper Hydropower Station, the Uralmash Works, the Knibiny combine, the motor works in Moscow and Gorky, some aircraft plants, the Stalingrad, Chelyabinsk and Kharkov tractor works, the Rostselmash Works, the city of Komsomolsk-on-Amur, the Turksib railway, the Grand Ferghana Canal, and many other great building projects of our first five-year plans. Dozens of research institutes and a far-flung network of higher educational establishments were founded in those days.

The Party charted an earlier unknown way of industrialization: to give top priority to heavy industry development, without reliance on external sources of finance, and without waiting years for capital to accumulate through the expansion of light industry. This was the only possible way in those conditions, though it was incredibly difficult for the country and the people. It was an innovative step in which the revolutionary enthusiasm of the masses was taken into account as a component of economic growth. Industrialization raised the country to a fundamentally new level in one heave. By the end of the thirties the Soviet Union had moved to first place in Europe and second place in the world for industrial output, becoming a truly great industrial power. This was a labour exploit of epoch-making significance, an exploit of emancipated labour, an exploit of the Bolshevik Party.

And taking a sober-minded view at history considering the sumtotal of domestic and international realities, one cannot help asking whether a course other than that suggested by the Party could have been taken in those conditions. If we wish to be faithful to history and the truth of life, there can be only one answer: no other course could be taken.

In those conditions, with the threat of imperialist aggression growing perceptibly, the Party was increasingly convinced that it was essential not to just cover but literally race across the distance from the sledgehammer and wooden plough to an advanced industry in the shortest possible time, or otherwise the cause of the Revolution would inevitably perish.

The viability of the Party's plans, understood and accepted by the masses, and of the slogans and concepts embodying the revolutionary spirit of the October Revolution, found expression in the extraordinary enthusiasm shown by millions of Soviet people who joined in building the country's industry. They had no machines and not enough to eat, but worked miracles nevertheless. They were inspired by the fact that they had a hand in a great historical cause. Though they were not sufficiently literate, their class instinct told them that they were participating in a momentous and unprecedented undertaking.

It is our duty and the duty of the coming generations to remember this exploit of our fathers and grandfathers. Everyone must know that their dedicated efforts were not in vain. They had endured everything that fell to their lot, and made a great contribution to the consolidation of the gains of the October Revolution, to laying the foundations of the strength that enabled them to safeguard the Motherland from a deadly peril, to save socialism for the future, for all of us, comrades. The memory of them will live forever!

At the same time, the period under review also saw some losses. They were in a certain sense connected with the successes I have just referred to. People came to believe in the universal effectiveness of rigid centralization, in that methods of command were the shortest and best way of resolving any and all problems. This showed in the attitude towards people, towards their conditions of life.

A system of Party and government control by mere injunction took shape in the country, and red tape established itself, even though Lenin had warned about its danger in his day. And a corresponding structure of administration and planning began to take shape. In industry - given its scale at the time, when literally all the main components of the industrial edifice were few and far between - such methods, such a system of management generally produced results. However, an equally rigid centralization-and-command system was impermissible in tackling the problems associated with reforms in the countryside.

It must be said frankly: at the new stage there was a deficit of the Leninist considerate attitude to the interests of the working peasantry. Most important of all, there was an underestimation of the fact that the peasantry as a class had changed radically in the years since the Revolution. The principal figure now was the middle peasant. He had asserted himself as a farmer working the land he had received from the Revolution and he had, over a whole decade, become convinced that Soviet government was his government too. He had become a staunch and dependable ally of the working class. An ally on a new basis, becoming convinced in practical terms that his life was increasingly taking a turn for the better.

And if there had been more consideration for objective economic laws and if more attention had been given to the social processes taking place in the village, if in general the attitude to this vast mass of the working peasantry, most of whom had taken part in the Revolution and had defended it from the white guards and the interventionists, had been politically more judicious, if there had been a consistent line to promote the alliance with the middle peasantry against the kulak, the village moneybag, then there would not have been all those excesses that occurred in carrying out collectivization.

Today it is clear: in a tremendous undertaking which affected the fate of the majority of the country's population there was a departure from Leninist policy towards the peasantry. This most important and very complex social process, in which a great deal depended on local conditions, was directed by administrative methods. A conviction had arisen that all problems could be solved at a stroke, overnight. Whole regions and parts of the country began to compete: who would achieve complete collectivization more quickly. Arbitrary percentage targets were issued from above. Flagrant violations of the principles of collectivization were common. Nor were excesses avoided in the struggle against the kulaks. The basically correct policy of fighting the kulaks was often interpreted so broadly that it swept in a considerable part of the middle peasantry too. Such is the reality of history.

But, comrades, if we assess the significance of collectivization as a whole in consolidating socialism in the c ountryside, it was in the final analysis a transformation of fundamental importance. Collectivization meant transforming the life of most people in the country on socialist lines. It created the social base for modernizing the agrarian sector and regearing it along the lines of advanced farming techniques; it made possible a considerable rise in the productivity of labour, and it released a substantial share of manpower needed for other spheres of socialist construction. All this had historic effects.

To understand the situation of those years it must be borne in mind that the administrative-command system, which had begun to take shape in the process of industrialization and which had received a fresh impetus during collectivization, had told on the whole socio-political life of the country. Once established in the economy, it had spread to its superstructure, curbing the democratic potential of socialism and holding back the progress of socialist democracy.

But the aforesaid does not give a full picture of how complex that period was. What had happened? The time of ideological-political tests of the utmost gravity to the Party was actually over. Millions of people had joined enthusiastically - and with success - in the work of bringing about socialist transformations. Yet at that time methods dictated by the period of the struggle with the hostile resistance of the exploiter classes were being mechanically transferred to the period of peaceful socialist construction, when conditions had changed cardinally. An atmosphere of intolerance, hostility, and suspicion was created in the country.

As time went on, this political practice gained in scale, and was backed up by the erroneous "theory" of an aggravation of the class struggle in the course of socialist construction.

All this had a dire effect on the country's socio-political development and produced grim consequences. Quite obviously it was the absence of a proper level of democratization in Soviet society that made possible the personality cult, the violations of legality, the wanton repressive measures of the thirties. I am putting things bluntly, those were real crimes stemming from an abuse of power. Many thousands of Communists and non-Party people were subjected to wholesale repressions. Such, comrades, is the bitter truth. Serious damage was done to the cause of socialism and to the authority of the Party. And we must say this bluntly. This is necessary to assert Lenin's ideal of socialism once and for all.

There is now much discussion about the role of Stalin in our history. His was an extremely contradictory personality. To remain faithful to historical truth we have to see both Stalin's incontestable contribution to the effort for socialism, to the defence of its gains, as well as the gross political errors, and the abuses committed by him and by those around him, for which our people paid a heavy price and which had grave consequences for the life of our society. It is sometimes said that Stalin did not know of many instances of lawlessness. Documents at our disposal show that this is not so. The guilt of Stalin and his immediate entourage before the Party and the people for the wholesale repressions and overriding lawlessness is enormous and unforgivable. This is a lesson for all generations.

Contrary to the assertions of our ideological opponents, the Stalin personality cult was certainly not inevitable. It was alien to the nature of socialism, represented a departure from its fundamental principles, and, therefore, has no justification. At its 20th and 22nd congresses the Party severely condemned the Stalin cult itself and its consequences. We now know that the political accusations and repressive measures against a number of Party leaders and statesmen, against many Communists and non-Party people, against economic executives and military men, against scientists and cultural personalities were a result of deliberate falsification.

Many accusations were later, especially after the 20th Party Congress, withdrawn. Thousands of innocent victims were completely exonerated.

But the process of restoring justice was not seen through to the end and was actually suspended in the middle of the sixties. Now, in line with decisions taken by the October 1987 plenary meeting of the Central Committee, we are having to return to this. The Political Bureau of the Central Committee has set up a commission to examine comprehensively new facts and documents pertaining to these matters, and those known previously. Appropriate decisions will be taken on the basis of the commission's findings.

All this will also be reflected in a concise history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, whose preparation is to be entrusted to a special commission of the Central Committee. This is something we have to do, the more so since even now there are still attempts to turn away from painful matters in our history, to hush them up, to make believe that nothing special happened. We cannot agree to this. This would be disregard for the historical truth, disrespect for the memory of the innocent victims of lawlessness and arbitrariness. Another reason why we cannot agree to this is that a truthful analysis must help us to solve today's problems of democratization, legality, glasnost, overcoming bureaucracy, in short, the vital problems of perestroika. That is why here too we have to be quite clear, precise, and consistent.

An honest understanding of our enormous achievements as well as of past misfortunes, their full and true political evaluation, will provide real moral guidelines for the future.

In assessing the period of the twenties and thirties after Lenin, we can say that we have covered a difficult road, replete with contradictions and complexities, but a big and heroic road. Neither gross errors nor departures from the principles of socialism could divert our people, our country from the road it embarked upon by the choice it made in 1917. The momentum of the October Revolution was too great! The ideas of socialism that had gripped the masses were too strong! The people felt themselves involved in a great effort and began enjoying the fruits of their work. Their patriotism acquired a new, socialist meaning.

And all this was brought out forcefully in the grim trials of the Great Patriotic War of 1941-45.

In the West there is now much talk about the situation on the eve of the war. Truths are being laced with half-truths, especially by those who are displeased with the results of World War II - political, territorial, and social - by those who are still out to amend those results. That is why they are interested in distorting the historical truth, in confusing cause and effect, and falsifying the chronology of events.

In this context they resort to any lies in order to saddle the Soviet Union with the blame for World War II, the road to which was supposedly cleared by the Ribbentrop-Molotov non-aggression pact. This matter merits being considered in greater detail.

Actually, it was by no means on September 1, 1939, that World War II became a tragic reality. Japan's seizure of Northeast China (the "Manchurian incident" of 1931-32), Italy's attack on Ethiopia (1935) and on Albania (the spring of 1939), the German-Italian intervention against republican Spain (1936-39), and Japan's armed invasion of North and then Central China (the summer of 1937) - these were the initial conflagrations of World War II.

It is a different matter that in those days the West still pretended that this did not concern it or did not concern it enough to come to the defence of the victims of aggression. Hatred of socialism, long-term designs, and class selfishness prevented a sober assessment of the real dangers. Even more: fascism was persistently being offered the mission of a strike force in an anti-communist "crusade." Following Ethiopia and China, Austria and Czechoslovakia were flung into the furnace of "appeasement," the sword hung over Poland, over all the Baltic and Danube states, and propaganda was being conducted openly in favour of turning the Ukraine into a wheatfield and livestock farm of the Third Reich. Ultimately, the main thrusts of aggression were being channelled against the Soviet Union, and since the scheming to divide up our country had begun long before the war, it is not hard to see how limited our options were.

It is said that the decision taken by the Soviet Union in concluding a non-aggression pact with Germany was not the best one. This may be so, if one is guided not by harsh reality, but by abstract conjectures torn out of their time frame. And in these circumstances, the issue was roughly the same as it had been at the time of the Brest Peace: was our country to be or not to be independent, was socialism on earth to be or not to be.

The U.S.S.R. made great efforts to build up a system of collective security and to avert a global slaughter. But the Soviet initiatives met with no response among Western political leaders and political intriguers who were coolly scheming how best to involve socialism in the flames of war and bring about its head-on collision with fascism.

Outcasts already by virtue of our socialist birth, we could under no circumstances be right from the imperialist point of view. As I said, the Western ruling circles, in an attempt to blot out their own sins, are trying to convince people that the nazi attack on Poland and thereby the start of World War II was triggered by the Soviet-German non-aggression pact of August 23, 1939. As if there had been no Munich agreement with Hitler signed by Britain and France back in 1938 with the active connivance of the U.S., no Anschluss of Austria, no crucifixion of the Spanish Republic, no nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia and Klaipeda, and no conclusion of non-aggression pacts with Germany by London and Paris in 1938. By the way, such a pact was concluded by prewar Poland too. All this, as you see, fitted neatly into the structure of imperialist policy, was and is considered to be in the nature of things.

It is known from documents that the date of Germany's attack on Poland ("not later than September 1") was fixed as early as April 3, 1939, that is, long before the Soviet-German pact. In London, Paris, and Washington it was known in minute detail how the preparations for the Polish campaign were really proceeding, just as it was known that the only barrier capable of stopping the Hitlerites could be the conclusion of an Anglo-Franco-Soviet military alliance not later than August 1939. These plans were also known to the leadership of our country, and that was why it sought to convince Britain and France of the need for collective measures. It also urged the Polish government to cooperate in curbing aggression.

But the Western powers had different designs: to beckon the U.S.S.R. with the promise of an alliance and thereby to prevent the conclusion of the non-aggression pact we had been offered, to deprive us of the chance to make better preparations for the inevitable attack by Hitler Germany on the U.S.S.R. Nor can we forget that in August 1939 the Soviet Union faced a very real threat of war on two fronts: in the West with Germany and in the East with Japan, which had started a bloody conflict on the Khalkhin Gol River.

But life and death, independent of conjectures, took their own course. A new chapter was beginning in contemporary history, a most grim and complex one. At that stage, however, we managed to stave off the collision with the enemy, an enemy who had left himself and his opponent but one choice: to triumph or to perish.

The aggression to which we were subjected was a merciless test of the viability of the socialist system, of the strength of the multinational Soviet state, of the patriotic spirit of Soviet men and women. We withstood this ordeal by fire and sword, comrades!

We prevailed because for our people this war became a Great Patriotic War, for in a struggle with such an enemy as German fascism the issue was one of life or death, of being free or of being enslaved.

We prevailed because it became for us a war of the entire people. Everyone rallied to the defence of the country: young and old, men and women, all the nations and nationalities of our great country. The generation born of the October Revolution and raised in the socialist system likewise entered their first battle. Unprecedented staunchness and heroism on the battlefield, a courageous struggle by the partisans and underground fighters behind the enemy lines, and tireless work in the rear almost round the clock.... That's what the war was for us.

Soviet men and women fought and worked to defend their country, the socialist system, the ideas and cause of the October Revolution. When this calamity came to our common home, the Soviet people did not flinch, did not falter - either under the blows of the initial setbacks and defeats, or under the weight of the millions of deaths, the torment and the suffering. From the first day of the war they had implicit faith in the coming Victory. In the frontlines, and in the rear, they did everything that was at the limit and beyond the limit of human endurance to hasten that long-awaited day. And when, on the 1,418th day of the war, Victory did come, the entire delivered world heaved a sigh of relief, paying tribute to the victorious, heroic, and hard-working Soviet people, to their gallant army, which had fought its way over thousands of kilometres, each of which had cost many lives, and untold blood and sweat.

The Great Patriotic War brought out to the full the talent of outstanding military leaders who had emerged from the midst of the people - Georgy Zhukov, Konstantin Rokossovsky, Alexander Vasilevsky, Ivan Konev, and other distinguished marshals, generals, and officers - those who commanded fronts and armies, corps, divisions, and regiments, companies and platoons. A factor in the achievement of Victory was the tremendous political will, purposefulness and persistence, and ability to organize and discipline people displayed in the war years by Joseph Stalin. But the brunt of the war was borne by the ordinary Soviet soldier - the great toiler of the people's own flesh and blood, valiant and devoted to his country. All honour and eternal glory to him!

Millions of veterans of the Great Patriotic War are in our ranks today too, taking vigorous part in our revolutionary perestroika, in the renewal of society. Our filial thanks to them!

The moving spirit behind all our efforts on the battlefield and at work was our Leninist Party. At the front, in the trenches Communists were the first to rise to the attack, their example inspiring others, in the rear they were the last to leave their workbenches, the fields and livestock farms. Soviet men and women, as never before, sensed that the Communist Party was their party and that the Communists were showing in practice what it meant to be the people's vanguard at a time when the flames of war were raging and when the issue was one of life or death.

It may be said with confidence: the years of the Great Patriotic War make up one of the most glorious and heroic pages in the history of the Party, pages inscribed with courage and valour, and the supreme dedication and self-sacrifice of millions of Communists. The war showed that the Soviet people, the Party, socialism, and the October Revolution are inseparable and that no power on earth can shatter this unity.

Socialism did not just stand fast and did not simply achieve victory. It emerged from this most terrible and destructive of wars stronger morally and politically, having enhanced its authority and influence throughout the world.

When the war ended, our ill-wishers predicted economic decline in our country and its absence from the world political scene for a long time to come; they considered that it would take us half a century, if not more, to cope with the aftermath of the war. But within an extremely short period of time the Soviet people had rebuilt the war-ravaged towns and villages, and raised from the ruins factories and mills, collective and state farms, schools and colleges, and cultural institutions.

And once again this was a manifestation of the great strength of the socialist state: the will of the Party motivated by an understanding of the supreme interests of the Land of the October Revolution; the staunchness and proletarian wisdom of the workers, who had shouldered the main burden of the peaceful transformation of the country's industrial might and of repairing the ravages of war, and the self-sacrifice, patience, and patriotism of the farmers, who gave all they had to feed the ruined country. It was also a manifestation of the friendship of the peoples, of their mutual assistance, of their readiness to render fraternal assistance to those who had suffered most, to those areas of our common Motherland that had been steamrolled especially mercilessly by the war.

It was the heroism of everyday work in those difficult postwar years that was the source of our achievements, of the economic, scientific and technical progress, of the harnessing of atomic energy, of the launching of the first spaceships, and of the raising of the people's economic and cultural standards.

But during this very same time - a time of new exploits by the people in the name of socialism - a contradiction between what our society had become and the old methods of leadership was making itself felt ever more appreciably. Abuses of power and violations of socialist legality continued. The "Leningrad case" and the "doctors' case" were fabricated. And not only that.... In short, there was a dearth of genuine respect for the people. People were

dedicatedly working, studying, seeking new knowledge, accepting difficulties and shortages, but sensing at the same time that alarm and hope were mounting in society. And all this gripped the public consciousness soon after Stalin's death.

In the mid-fifties, especially after the 20th Communist Party Congress, a wind of change swept the country, the people's spirits rose, they took heart, became bolder and more confident. It required no small courage on the part of the Party and its leadership, headed by Nikita Khrushchev, to condemn the personality cult and its consequences, and to re-establish socialist legality.

The old stereotypes in domestic and foreign policy began to crumble. Attempts were made to break down the practice of administration by injunction established in the thirties and forties, to make socialism more dynamic, to emphasize humanitarian ideals and values, and to revive the creative spirit of Leninism in theory and practice.

The desire to change the priorities of economic development, to bring into play incentives related to a personal interest in the results of one's work keynoted the decisions of the September 1953 and July 1955 plenary meetings of the Party Central Committee. More attention began to be devoted to the development of agriculture, housing, light industry, the sphere of consumption, and to everything related to satisfying human needs.

In short, there were changes for the better - in Soviet society and in international relations. However, no small number of subjectivist errors were committed, and they handicapped socialism's advance to a new stage, moreover doing much to discredit progressive initiatives. The fact is that fundamentally new problems of domestic and foreign policy, and of Party development, were often dealt with arbitrarily, with the aid of the old political and economic mechanism. But the failures of the reforms undertaken in that period were mainly due to the fact that they were not backed up by broad democratization.

At the October 1964 plenary meeting of the Party Central Committee there was a change of the leadership of the Party and the country, and decisions were taken to overcome arbitrary practices and distortions in domestic and foreign policies. The Party sought to stabilize policy, and make it realistic and thorough.

The March and September 1965 plenary meetings of the Party Central Committee formulated new approaches to economic management. An economic reform, and ambitious programmes for developing new areas and promoting the productive forces were worked out and began to be put into effect. In the first few years this changed the situation in the country for the better. The economic and scientific potential increased, defence capacity was strengthened, the standard of living rose. Many foreign policy moves enhanced the international prestige of our state. Strategic parity with the U.S.A. was achieved.

The country had at its disposal extensive resources for the further acceleration of its development. But to utilize these resources and put them to work, cardinal new changes were needed in society and, of course, the corresponding political will. Both were lacking. And even much of what had been decided remained on paper, was left suspended in mid-air. The pace of our development was substantially retarded.

At the April 1985 plenary meeting of its Central Committee and at its 27th Congress the Party frankly identified the causes of the situation that had arisen, laid bare the mechanism retarding our development, and gave it a fundamental assessment.

It was stated that in the latter years of the life and activities of Leonid Brezhnev the search for ways of further advancement had been largely hampered by an addiction to habitual formulas and schemes, which did not reflect the new realities. The gap between word and deed had widened. Negative processes in the economy were gathering momentum and had, in effect, created a pre-crisis situation. Many aberrations had arisen in the social, spiritual and moral spheres, and they were distorting and deforming the principles of socialist justice, undermining the people's faith in it, and giving rise to social alienation and immorality in various forms. The growing discrepancy between the lofty principles of socialism and the everyday realities of life was becoming intolerable.

The healthy forces in the Party and in society as a whole were becoming more and more acutely aware of the pressing need to overcome negative phenomena, to reverse the course of events, to secure an acceleration of the country's socio-economic development, and to bring about a moral purification and renewal of socialism.

It was in response to this extremely acute social need that the April 1985 plenary meeting of the Central Committee put forward the concept and strategy of accelerating the country's socio-economic development, and the course aimed at a renewal of socialism. These were given more elaborate theoretical and political formulation in the decisions of the 27th Party Congress and subsequent plenary meetings of the Central Committee, and assumed final shape in the general policy of a revolutionary reorganization of all the aspects of socialist society's life.

The perestroika idea rests upon our seventy-year history, on the sound foundation of the basically new social edifice erected in the Soviet Union; it combines continuity and innovation, the historical experience of Bolshevism and the realities of socialist society today. It is up to us to continue and carry foward the cause of the pioneers of the Revolution and of socialism. And we are certain to achieve this by our work, by making creative use of the experience of the generations that blazed the October Revolution trail before us and for us!

Comrades, we are following a revolutionary road, and this road is not for the weak and faint-hearted; this is a road for the strong and the brave. And that is what the Soviet people have always been - in the years of the greatest social transformations, in the years of ordeals of war, and in the years of peaceful constructive effort. It is the people who shape their history, their destiny - never simple, but inimitable and invaluable, just as human life itself is. And this is a hundredfold more true when we speak about the history of socialism, about carrying on the cause of the Great Revolution.

The working class was, and still is, the cementing force and vanguard of the people. Even at the dawn of the revolutionary movement it followed Lenin's summons: "Fight for freedom, without **even for a minute** abandoning the idea of socialism, without ceasing to work for its realization, to prepare its forces and to organize for the achievement of socialism." It was the working class, in alliance with all the working people, that carried out the Great October Revolution, that built socialism, and upheld it in life-and-death clashes with the enemy. It endured, suffered, and withstood everything! Today, too, it stands in the vanguard of developing socialism, of the revolutionary perestroika. Glory to it and great honour!

Our Leninist Party emerged and developed as a militant and active vanguard of the working class. It is to the working class that it owes its profound confidence, firmness, discipline, and staunchness in the struggle for the ideals of socialism, its profound and humane understanding of life. Now, too, having become a Party of the whole people, it has retained these finest features of that militant and constructive class. Today and at all stages in the history of socialism.

It is the principal definitive message of our history that all these seventy years our people have lived and worked under the Party's leadership in the name of socialism, in the name of a better and juster life. This is the destiny of our creative, constructive people!

II. SOCIALISM IN DEVELOPMENT AND PERESTROIKA

Comrades, the need for perestroika comes from our pressing problems which await urgent solutions. But the more deeply we examined our problems and probed their meaning, the clearer it became that perestroika also has a broader socio-political and historical context.

Perestroika implies not only eliminating the stagnation and conservatism of the preceding period, and correcting the mistakes committed, but also doing away with outdated social patterns and work methods. It implies imparting to socialism the latest forms, corresponding to the conditions and demands of the scientific and technological revolution, and to the intellectual progress of Soviet society. This is a relatively lengthy process of the revolutionary renewal of society, a process that has its logic and stages.

Lenin saw the historic mission of socialism in the need to prepare by many years of effort for the transition to communism. The leader of the Revolution spoke highly of the ability of Marx and Engels "to analyze the transitional forms with the utmost thoroughness in order to establish, in accordance with the concrete historical peculiarities of each particular case, **from what and to what** the given transitional form is passing." In short, our teachers warned us repeatedly that the path of building the new society is a long series of transitions.

We have every reason to view perestroika as a definite historical stage in our society's advance. And in reply to Lenin's question "from what and to what" we are passing, it must be said quite definitely: we have to impart to socialism a new quality or, as they say, a second wind, and this requires far-reaching reforms in all spheres of our life, both material and spiritual, and bringing the humanism of our system to the full blossom.

The purpose of perestroika is the full theoretical and practical re-establishment of Lenin's conception of socialism, in which indisputable priority belongs to the working man with his ideals and interests, to humanitarian values in the economy, in social and political relations, and in culture.

Our hope of achieving revolutionary purification and reform requires tapping the enormous social potentialities of socialism by stirring the individual to still greater activity and emphasizing the human factor. As a result of perestroika socialism can and must make full use of its potentialities as a truly humanitarian system, serving and elevating man. This is a society for the people, for the flourishing of their creative work, well-being, health, physical and spiritual development, a society where man feels he is the full-fledged master, and is indeed that.

Two key problems of the development of society determine the fate of perestroika. These are democratization of all social life and a radical economic reform.

Perestroika, continuing as it does what the October Revolution began, has put forward the task of further deepening and developing socialist democracy. The democratization of society is at the core of perestroika, and on its progress depends the success of perestroika itself and - one can say without exaggeration - the future of socialism in general. This is the surest guarantee of changes, both political and economic, ruling out any movement backward.

The changes taking place in the country today probably constitute the biggest step towards developing socialist democracy since the October Revolution.

In reorganizing our economic and political system, it is our duty to create, first of all, a dependable and flexible mechanism for the genuine involvement of all the people in deciding state and social matters. Secondly, people must be taught in practice to live in the conditions of deepening democracy, to extend and consolidate human rights, to develop a contemporary political culture of the masses. In other words, to teach and to learn democracy.

As we celebrate the 70th anniversary of our Revolution and ponder over the future, we have to take a closer look at how the process of the democratization of society is proceeding and what stands in its way. The difficulties and contradictions here are considerable and at times unexpected; there is no avoiding a conflict between the new, the advanced and the old, the outdated. There is a definite uncertainty and hesitancy.

In the early days following the October Revolution Lenin pointed out that the workers and peasants were still "timid," still not resolute enough, not yet accustomed to the thought that it was for them to take over all the levers of administration. "But the Revolution of October 1917 is strong, viable and invincible," he wrote, "because it awakens these qualities, breaks down the old impediments, removes the worn-out shackles, and leads the working people on to the road of the independent creation of a new life."

Today too we can see how difficult people find it to adapt to the new situation, to the possibility and necessity of living and solving all problems by democratic methods. Many are still "timid," act irresolutely, fear responsibility, and are still in the grip of obsolete rules and instructions.

The task is to cultivate in people a taste for independence and responsibility in their approach to production and social matters of any scale, to develop self-government of the people, exercised by the people and for the people.

The development of self-government will proceed above all through the Soviets, which must, according to the Party's plans, completely live up to their role of competent bodies. Lately, the powers and possibilities of the Soviets at all levels have been substantially extended. This process will continue further, and that means the Soviets will gain in strength and Soviet democracy will be extended.

We have begun improving the electoral system. The elections held in June this year convinced us that the new approach is correct and fruitful. They showed the people's increased political activity, their interest in getting their really best representatives elected to the Soviets, although this time too there were instances of formalism and overorganization.

Perestroika and the development of democracy make it possible to switch into higher gear the full energy, potentialities and powers of the trade unions, the Young Communist League, and other public organizations, including those that have arisen in recent years, such as the U.S.S.R. War and Labour Veterans Council, the women's councils, the Soviet Cultural Fund, and the Lenin Children's Fund. It is important that their everyday activities be relevant to the solution of vitally important problems and reflect the interests of broad sections of the people.

Much that is new and encouraging has appeared in the work collectives and in activities at the grass roots. There is broad scope opening up for useful initiatives, for solving all pressing problems promptly and without procrastination.

The new processes that have developed in the country also require a new approach to problems of general, political and legal culture, to, I would say, the proper use of socialist democracy. It is defficiencies in this area that are largely responsible for such faults as bureaucracy and the abuse of power, rank worship, waste and irresponsibility.

The proper use of socialist democracy rejects methods of commands or "pressure," organizational vagueness, and the substitution of empty talk for deeds. All are alien to socialism. It is also beyond doubt that the broader and deeper democracy is, the more attention must be given to socialist legality and the rule of law, the more we need organization and conscious discipline.

Democracy must not be confined to the political sphere. It must permeate all spheres of human relations. We proceed from the premise that socialism is a society of growing diversity in people's opinions, relationships and activities. Every person has his own social experience, his own level of knowledge and education, his own distinctive perceptions of what is taking place. Hence, a tremendous range of views, convictions and assessments which, naturally, require careful consideration and comparison. We are for a diversity of public opinion, a richness of spiritual life. We need not fear openly raising and solving difficult problems of social development, criticizing and arguing. It is in such circumstances that the truth is born and that correct decisions take shape. Socialist democracy must wholly serve socialism, the interests of the working people.

Comrades, a sound foundation for accelerated forward movement in all directions can be created only on the basis of

radical changes in the economy. Moreover, perestroika itself can gather full momentum only after it has given a strong impulse to the national economy. And that in turn involves deep changes in the economic mechanism, in the entire system of economic management.

The purpose of the radical economic reform begun in the country is to assure, over the next two or three years, a transition from an overly centralized command system of management to a democratic system based mainly on economic methods and on an optimal combination of centralism and self-management. This presupposes a sharp expansion of the autonomy of enterprises and associations, their transition to the principle of self-supporting and self-financing, and the investment of work collectives with all the powers necessary for this.

The economic reform is no longer just plans and intentions, still less abstract theoretical discourses. It is becoming a part of life. Today a considerable number of enterprises and associations in industry, construction, transport and agriculture are working on the principles of self-sufficiency and self-finance. From the beginning of next year enterprises producing 60 per cent of our industrial output will be operating on this basis. The Law on the State Enterprise (Association) will have become effective.

All this is already having an effect on practical economic activity. In the work collectives there is a noticeably growing interest in financial and economic performance. They are beginning to really count inputs and outputs, save in things big and small, and find the most effective ways of dealing with problems. Today we must once again firmly say: the Party will tolerate no departures from the adopted principles of the economic reform. All the changes planned must be and will be implemented in full.

The economic reform and perestroika in general actively advance to the forefront the human being. Social justice requires that we should give more attention to a person's individual abilities, and reward morally and materially those who work better and more, setting others an example.

True talents and scintillating personalities are our invaluable assets; they must be taken care of, and all the necessary conditions must be created for their work and life. We want the dignity, knowledge, work and ability of everyone to be respected everywhere. So that the honest, hard-working, creative person would be assured that his work will be properly appreciated, that he will always be able to prove that he is right and to find support, while the idler, the moneygrabber, the bureaucrat, and the boor will be rebuffed and unmasked. The favourable changes that are taking place in our country - and they are receiving extensive coverage in the mass media - have the enthusiastic support of the people.

An unconscious attitude to work is today particularly intolerable. The person armed with contemporary knowledge and machinery is producing more and more, and his work is increasingly dependent on the activities of thousands of other participants in social production. In these circumstances the negligence of even a single worker, engineer, or scientist can have extremely grave consequences and is fraught with enormous losses for society.

I would like to emphasize the growing importance of intellectual work, of the interaction of science, technology and society, of the humanitarian, moral and ethical aspects of science and scientific and technical progress.

We want all the advances of science and technology to be put at the service of man, we do not want them to upset the environmental balance. We are drawing harsh lessons from tragic events such as the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. We advocate an end to the use of science for military purposes. Today engineers, scientists, physicians, educators, writers and members of the artistic community must enhance their sense of social responsibility, their professional competence and the value of their creative achievements.

In rehabilitating material incentives and in placing stronger emphasis on their collective forms, we should not do so at the expense of socio-cultural, moral or psychological incentives. They are of exceptional importance for enabling relations of collectivism and comradeship and the socialist way of life to develop normally and our Soviet values to take firm root in the thoughts and actions of our people.

Comrades, we have every right to say that the nationalities question has been solved in our country. The Revolution paved the way for the equality of our nations not only in legal but also in socio-economic terms, having done a great deal to level up the economic, social and cultural development of all our republics, regions and peoples. One of the greatest gains of the October Revolution is the friendship of the Soviet peoples. It is, indeed, a unique thing in world history. And for us, it is a chief factor on which the Soviet Union depends for its strength and might.

Today, paying tribute to the outstanding achievements of Leninist nationalities policy, the peoples of our country express their profound respect and gratitude to the great Russian people for their selflessness, genuine internationalism and invaluable contribution to the creation, development and consolidation of the socialist union of free and equal republics, to the economic, social and cultural progress of all the peoples of the Soviet Union.

So, comrades, let us cherish our great common asset - the friendship of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. And let us, therefore, never forget that we are living in a multinational state, where all social, economic, cultural and legal decisions inevitably affect the nationalities question. Let us act as Lenin would, and build up the potential of every nation, everyone of the Soviet peoples, to the maximum.

Relations between nationalities in our country are a vital issue in our life. We must be considerate and tactful to the utmost in all things that concern the interests and feelings of nationalities comprising our union; we must ensure the most active participation of people of all nationalities and ethnic groups in carrying out the diverse tasks of our multinational society. We intend to make a more deep-going analysis and to discuss these issues in the near future with an eye to what perestroika, democratization and the new stage in its development are introducing in the life of the country. The friendship and cooperation of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. are sacred to us. This was and will be so. It is consonant with the spirit of Leninism, with the traditions of the October Revolution and with the vital interests of all nationalities and ethnic groups in our country.

Comrades, Soviet society's passage to a radically new quality, its breakthrough into the future is only possible along a broad front which also includes socialism's intellectual sphere - science and education, literature and art, and all the social and moral values of the Soviet people. A high standard of culture not only creates the image of a society but actually keeps it alive and embodies its intellectual and cultural potential. It could be described as an agent cementing the social fabric, as a catalyst of its dynamic development.

We should keep raising the prestige of socialist culture.

Scholars, scientists, inventors, writers, journalists, artists, actors and teachers - all those who work in various spheres of culture and education - are called upon to be champions of perestroika. The Party counts on our intelligentsia's vigorous civic and social involvement.

The Soviet people are now an enlightened people, something the great educators of the past could only dream about. But here too we cannot afford to be complacent. Our accomplishments should not allow us to close our eyes to the enormous scope and gravity of the tasks we must tackle today. We see that the educational system has in many respects fallen short of today's requirements. The quality of education in schools, colleges and universities and of the training of workers and professionals does not fully meet the needs of the day.

We must surge ahead in earnest and bring about radical changes in this sphere too. That is the way the Party approaches the reform of secondary education and vocational training, the reorganization in higher education. The CPSU Central Committee has decided to examine topical issues of education at one of its plenary meetings.

Such, comrades, are the strategic tasks we are to accomplish in the course of our revolutionary perestroika launched to reorganize all the socialist aspects of our life.

Thirty months have elapsed since the April plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee. What are our achievements? What level have we reached? I believe that raising these questions is both relevant and essential at this jubilee session.

The general conclusion made on this score at the plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee just held is that we are at a turning point. By and large, we have passed through the first stage of our perestroika effort. A concept of perestroika has been worked out on the basis of an in-depth analysis of the situation and of the outlook for the country's development. A fresh political, moral and psychological atmosphere has been created in our country. The Party has succeeded in making people more concerned about public affairs, in promoting their initiative, in making them more exacting, more critical and self-critical, in enhancing glasnost, and in paving the way for tangible changes in people's thinking and attitudes.

Support for perestroika and the demand that it make steady progress are the main features of the position taken by an overwhelming majority of the Soviet people at the current stage. Industrial workers, collective farmers and intelligentsia show understanding of the need to enhance discipline, efficiency and the quality of labour. A vigorous quest for new forms of labour organization and remuneration is under way at factories, construction sites, collective and state farms, and research establishments.People are making greater demands on themselves, on executives and experts, and they are combating mismanagement and irresponsibility. We highly value this civic stand of our people, seeing it as an obvious expression of support for the course taken by the Party.

There is reason to speak of certain positive changes that have occurred on the practical plane, first and foremost in the socio-economic sphere. Output growth rates have increased. Changes of a qualitative nature are in the offing in the economy, major scientific and technological programmes have been launched, and our engineering industry is being modernized. The development of agriculture, particularly of animal husbandry, is showing increased stability.

You all know, comrades, how unfavourable the weather was in most regions of our country this year. Nevertheless, we succeeded in harvesting more than 210 million tons of grain. This was the result of strenuous efforts exerted by the people and by the Party which encouraged them to work in a new way.

The improvements that have begun in the economy have made it possible to initiate important measures in the social sphere. The scale of housing construction has increased noticeably, and the service sector is expanding. Incomes are growing. The salaries of teachers and medical personnel have been raised. Major programmes are being implemented in education and health.

Still, all that is only a beginning. Today we can say that we are entering a new stage of perestroika, the stage at which all our policies, all our decisions are taking the shape of practical action, being translated into reality. This calls for a great deal of effort on the part of all our people - the working class, the farmers, the intelligentsia, and all our cadres. From now on, our ideas, plans, attitudes and methods of work will have to pass the test of practical application.

One can now feel a growing pressure in everything. But that is the vibrant pressure of creative, vigorous effort, of political and intellectual activity. There is a mobilizing quality to this pressure, comrades, and it makes you feel good.

I would like to stress that viewed from this angle, the next two or perhaps three years will be particularly difficult, decisive and, in a sense, critical. The principal reason is that we will have to simultaneously tackle large-scale tasks in the economy, in the social sphere, in the reorganization of government and public administration, in ideology and in culture.

In the economic sphere, we must effect far-reaching structural changes, achieve a radical acceleration of scientific and technological progress, largely reorganize the economic mechanism and thus take a decisive step in switching the economy to the track of intensive development.

The difficulty of the forthcoming period also lies in the fact that the transformations will come to affect the interests of ever greater masses of people, social groups and strata, and of all cadres. We are confident that widespread support of perestroika by the people and a profound understanding of the need for the changes, for the vigorous and unflagging pursuit of perestroika despite the difficulties arising in its course will continue to shape the situation in our country.

But it would be a mistake to take no notice of a certain increase in the resistance of the conservative forces that see perestroika simply as a threat to their selfish interests and objectives. This resistance can be felt not only at management level but also in work collectives. Nor can one really doubt that the conservative forces will seize upon any difficulty in a bid to discredit perestroika and provoke dissatisfaction among the people. Even now there are those who prefer to keep ticking off the slip-ups instead of getting down to combating shortcomings and looking for new solutions. Naturally, these people never say that they oppose perestroika. Rather, they would have us believe that they are fighting against its negative side-effects, that they are guardians of the ideological principles that supposedly might be eroded by the increasing activity of the masses.

But, comrades, isn't it time to stop trying to scare us with all sorts of slip-ups? Of course negative side-effects are inevitable in any undertaking, particularly if it is novel. But the consequences of marking time, of stagnation and indifference have a much greater impact and cost a lot more than the side-effects that arise temporarily in the course of a creative effort to reshape the social fabric.

We should learn to identify, expose and neutralize the manoeuvres of the opponents of perestroika - those who act to impede our advance and trip us up, who gloat over our difficulties and setbacks, who try to drag us back into the past. Nor should we succumb to the pressure of the overly zealous and impatient - those who refuse to accept the objective logic of perestroika, who voice their disappointment with what they regard as a slow rate of change, who claim that this change does not yield the necesary results fast enough. It should be clear that one cannot leap over essential stages and try to accomplish everything overnight.

Perestroika carries on the revolutionary cause, and today it is absolutely essential to master the skill of exercising revolutionary self-restraint.

This self-restraint does not mean that we should sit back or drift with the current. It implies an ability to assess the situation realistically, not to back down before difficulties, not to panic, not to lose one's head over either success or failure - an ability to work strenuously and purposefully every day and every hour, to find and apply the best possible solutions in everything that life dictates us.

Hence the need for confident, unswerving and purposeful efforts to implement what we have mapped out, to attain the objectives and accomplish the tasks that have been set.

Our approach should consist in identifying and analyzing contradictions, grasping their nature and, on this basis, devising a system of political, economic, social, organizational and ideological measures.

Comrades, the success of perestroika depends above all on the energy and commitment of the Party and of every Communist, on the force of their example. At this juncture of historic responsibility, at this time of socio-economic transformations, the Communist Party has boldly launched a resolute struggle for society's renewal and

taken on the most difficult part of the task. We can say with confidence that the great cause of the October Revolution, the cause of revolutionary perestroika is in firm hands. The Communists will discharge their duty with a high sense of responsibility before our people and our age.

The priority task today is to radically improve the activities of Party organizations, of Party bodies and cadres. We must bring about a breakthrough in the work of every Party organization; every Party committee and every Communist should step up their efforts.

Things are now in motion wherever this has been done, wherever Party leaders and Communists have aroused the initiative and enterprise of the masses, wherever they have boldly taken the path of democratization and glasnost, of cost-effective management and the collective contract, wherever the door has been opened to new forms of labour organization and incentives, of meeting human needs.

But we can see that some cities, districts and regions, and even some republics have not yet got down to perestroika in earnest. That is a direct result of political and organizational inertia and lack of initiative displayed by Party committees and their leaders. This is our reality, too.

A turn for the better is a special responsibility that now rests with the primary Party organizations. They are in fact the terminals of all the wires of perestroika. It is the initiative of the primary Party organizations on which the progress of the transformations, the ability to mobilize and inspire people, and the ability to achieve tangible improvements depend above all. To sum up, comrades, perestroika will not succeed without a drastic invigoration of the activities of all Party organizations.

And so we must have a more businesslike and a more democratic attitude, we must improve organization and tighten discipline. Then we will be able to put perestroika into high gear and impart a new impetus to socialism in its development.

III. THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION AND TODAY'S WORLD

Comrades, without the Great Revolution in Russia, the world would not be what it is today. Before that turning point in world history, the "right" of the strong and the rich, as well as wars of aggression were a customary and standard feature of international relations. The Soviet government, which promulgated the famous Decree on Peace as its first legal act, rose against this state of affairs and introduced into international practice something that used to be excluded from "big politics" - the people's common sense and the interests of the working masses.

During the few years when Lenin directed Soviet foreign policy, he not only worked out its underlying principles but also showed how they should be applied in a most unusual and abruptly changing situation. Indeed, contrary to initial expectations, the rupture of the "weakest link" in the chain of the capitalist system was not the "last, decisive battle" but the beginning of a long and complex process.

It was a major achievement of the founder of the Soviet state that he timely discerned the actual prospects the victory in the Civil War opened before the new Russia.

He realized that the country had secured not merely a "breathing spell" but something much more important - "a new period, in which we have won the right to our fundamental international existence in the network of capitalist states." In a resolute step, Lenin suggested a policy of learning and mastering the art of long-term "existence side by side" with them. Opposing leftist extremism, he argued that it was possible for countries with different social systems to coexist peacefully.

It took only 18 to 24 months following the Civil War to end the international political isolation of the state of workers and peasants. Treaties were concluded with neighbouring countries and then, at Rapallo, with Germany. Britain, France, Italy, Sweden and other capitalist countries extended diplomatic recognition to the Soviet Republic. The first steps were taken to build equitable relations with oriental countries - China, Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan.

These were not simply the first victories of Lenin's foreign policy and diplomacy. They were a breakthrough into a fundamentally new level of international relations. The main thrust of our foreign policy has remained unchanged. We have every right to describe it as a Leninist policy of peace, mutually beneficial international cooperation and friendship among nations.

Naturally, not all our subsequent foreign policy efforts were successful. We have had our share of setbacks. We did not make full use of all the opportunities that opened before us both prior to and after World War II. We failed to translate the enormous moral prestige with which the Soviet Union emerged from the war into effective efforts to consolidate the peace-loving, democratic forces and to stop those who orchestrated the cold war. We did not always respond adequately to imperialist provocations.

It is true that some things could have been tackled better and that we could have been more efficient. Nevertheless, we can say on this memorable occasion that the overall thrust of our policy has remained in concert with the basic course worked out and charted by Lenin - consonant with the very nature of socialism, with its principled commitment to peace.

This was overwhelmingly instrumental in averting the outbreak of a nuclear war and in preventing imperialism from winning the cold war. Together with our allies, we defeated the imperialist strategy of "rolling back socialism." Imperialism had to curb its claims to world domination. At the present juncture it was the fruit of our peace policy that we proceeded from in working out novel approaches in line with new thinking.

Naturally, there have been changes in the Lenin's concept of peaceful coexistence. At first it was needed above all to create a modicum of external conditions for the construction of a new society in the country of the socialist revolution. Continuing the class-based policy of the victorious proletariat, peaceful coexistence later, particularly in the nuclear age, became a condition for the survival of the entire human race.

The April 1985 plenary meeting of the CPSU Central Committee was a landmark in the development of Leninist thought along this line too. The new concept of foreign policy was presented in detail at the 27th Congress.

As you know, this concept proceeds from the idea that for all the profound contradictions of the contemporary world, for all the radical differences among the countries that comprise it, it is interrelated, interdependent and integral.

The reasons for this include the internationalization of world economic ties, the comprehensive scope of the scientific and technological revolution, the essentially novel role played by the mass media, the state of the Earth's resources, the common environmental danger, and the crying social problems of the developing world which affect us all. The main reason, however, is the problem of human survival. This problem is now with us because the development of nuclear weapons and the threatening prospect of their use have called into question the very survival of the human race.

That was how Lenin's idea about the priority of the interests of social development acquired a new meaning and a new importance.

Since the April plenary meeting we have made our vision of progress towards a safe world and durable peace sufficiently clear to everyone. Our intentions and our will are recorded in the decisions taken by the highest political forum of the Party - the 27th

Congress - as well as in the new edition of the CPSU Programme, in the programme for nuclear disarmament set forth in the Statement of January 15, 1986, in the Delhi Declaration, in other documents, and in official pronouncements by the Soviet Union's leaders.

Acting jointly with the other countries of the socialist community, we have submitted several important initiatives to the United Nations, including a project for devising a comprehensive system of international peace and security. The Warsaw Treaty states have addressed NATO and all European countries with a proposal on reducing armed forces and armaments to a level of reasonable sufficiency. We have suggested comparing the two alliances' military doctrines in order to make them exclusively defensive. We have put forward a concrete plan for the prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons and are working vigorously in this direction. We have advanced proposals on devising effective methods for the verification of arms reductions, including on-site inspection.

We have come out resolutely for strengthening the prestige of the United Nations, for the full and effective use of the powers conferred upon it and its agencies by the international community. We are doing all we possibly can to enable the United Nations, a universal mechanism to competently discuss and ensure a collective quest for a balance of interests of all countries, and to discharge its peacemaking functions effectively.

The most important thing is that our concept and our firm dedication to peace are reflected in practical action, in all our international moves, and in the very style of our foreign policy and diplomacy which are permeated with a commitment to dialogue - a frank and honest dialogue conducted with due regard for mutual concerns and for the advances of science, without attempting to outmanoeuvre or deceive anyone. And so, now that more than two years have elapsed, we can say with confidence that the new political thinking is not merely another declaration or appeal but a philosophy of action and, if you will, a philosophy of a way of life. In its development, it is keeping pace with objective processes under way in our world, and it is in fact already working.

The October 1986 meeting in Reykjavik ranks among the events which have occurred since the new stage in international affairs began, which deserve to be mentioned on this occasion and which will go down in history. The Reykjavik meeting gave a practical boost to the new political thinking, enabled it to gain ground in diverse social and political quarters, and made international political contacts more fruitful.

The new thinking with its regard for universal human values and emphasis on common sense and openness, is forging ahead on the international scene, destroying the stereotypes of anti-Sovietism and dispelling distrust to our initiatives and actions.

It is true that, gauged against the scope of the tasks mankind will have to tackle to ensure its survival, very little has so far been accomplished. But a beginning has been made, and the first signs of change are in evidence. This is borne out, among other things, by the understanding we have reached with the United States on concluding in the near future an agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles.

The conclusion of this agreement is very important in itself: it will, for the first time, eliminate a whole class of nuclear weapons, be the first tangible step along the path of scrapping nuclear arsenals, and will show that it is in fact possible to advance in this direction without prejudice to anyone's interests.

That is obviously a major success of the new way of thinking, a result of our readiness to search for mutually acceptable solutions while strictly safeguarding the principle of equal security.

However, the question concerning this agreement was largely settled back in Reykjavik, at my second meeting with the U.S. President.

In this critical period the world expects the third and fourth Soviet-U.S. summits to produce more than merely an official acknowledgement of the decisions agreed upon a year ago, and more than merely a continuation of the discussion. The growing danger that weapons may be modernized to a point where they will become uncontrollable is urging us to waste no time.

That is why we will work unremittingly at these meetings for a palpable breakthrough, for concrete results in reducing strategic offensive armaments and barring weapons from outer space - the key to removing the nuclear threat.

What, then, are the reasons for our optimism, for regarding comprehensive security really attainable? This deserves to be discussed here in detail.

At this new turning point in world history as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of our Revolution which could not have won without theoretical preparation, we are examining the theoretical aspects of the prospects of advancement to durable peace.

The new way of thinking has helped us to generally prove that a comprehensive system of international security in the context of disarmament is needed and possible. Now we must prove that the attainment of this goal is necessary and feasible. We must identify the laws governing the interaction of the forces which, through rivalry, contradictions and conflicting interests, can produce the desired effect. In this connection we should begin by posing some tough questions - of course, tackling them from Leninist positions and using Leninist methodology.

The first question relates to the nature of imperialism. We know that it is the major source of the war threat.

It goes without saying that external factors cannot change the nature of a social system. But, given the current stage of the world's development and the new level of its interdependence and integration, is it possible to influence that nature and block its more dangerous manifestations?

In other words, can one count on the laws operating in the integral world, in which universal human values have top priority, to restrict the scope of the destructive effects produced by the operation of the egocentric laws which benefit only the ruling classes and are basic to the capitalist system?

The second question is connected with the first one: can capitalism get rid of militarism and function and develop in the economic sphere without it? Is it not a delusion on our part to invite the West to draw up and compare reconversion programmes for switching the economy to civilian production?

The third question: can the capitalist system do without neocolonialism which is currently one of the factors essential to its survival?

In other words, can this system function without the practices of inequitable trade with the Third World, fraught with unforeseeable consequences?

Another related question: how realistic is our hope that the awareness of the terrible threat the world is facing - and we know that this awareness is making its way even into the higher echelons of the Western ruling elite - will be translated into practical policies?

After all, however forceful the arguments of common sense, however well-developed the sense of responsibility, however powerful the instinct of self-preservation, there are still things which must not be underrated and which are determined by an economic and, consequently, a class-based self-interest.

In other words, the question is whether capitalism can adapt itself to the conditions of a nuclear-free world without weapons, to the conditions of a new and equitable economic order, to the conditions in which the intellectual and moral values of the two world systems will be compared honestly. These are far from idle questions. The course history will take in the coming decades will depend on the way they are answered.

But even posing these questions is enough to grasp the gravity of the task that lies ahead. We will see them answered in due time. Meanwhile, the viability of the programme for a nuclear-free and safe world will not only depend on its flawless scientific substantiation but will also be tested by the course of events - something that is influenced by a wide variety of factors, many of them new.

It is in fact already being tested. Here too we are loyal to the Leninist tradition, to the very essence of Leninism - an organic blend of theory and practice, an approach to theory as a tool of practice and to practice as a mechanism verifying the viability of theory.

That is how we are acting, projecting the new way of thinking onto our foreign policy activities, adjusting and specifying it, and adding actual political experience to its content.

To sum up, what do we count on in our awareness that a safe world will have to be built jointly with capitalist countries?

The postwar period has witnessed an in-depth modification of the contradictions that used to determine the principal trends in the world's economy and politics. I refer above all to the trends that inevitably led in the past to wars, to world wars between capitalist countries themselves.

Today the situation is different. It is not only the lessons of the past war but also the fear of sapping its own strength in the face of socialism, by now a world system, that have prevented capitalism from allowing its "internal" contradictions to go to extremes.

These contradictions began to evolve into a technological race against competitors and were dampened with the help of neocolonialism. A kind of latter-day "peaceful" repartitioning of the world was started, in line with the rule Lenin identified - "according to capital," the bigger share going to whoever was strongest and wealthiest at the moment.

Some countries began to "ease" tensions in their economies by rechannelling resources into the military-industrial complex on the pretext of a "Soviet threat." The changes occurring within the technological and organizational infrastructure of the capitalist economy also helped to allay contradictions and to balance different interests.

But that is not all there is to it. Since an alliance between a socialist country and capitalist states proved possible in the past, when the threat of fascism arose, does this not suggest a lesson for the present, for today's world which faces the threat of nuclear catastrophe and the need to ensure safe nuclear power production and overcome the danger to the environment?

These are all perfectly real and acute problems. Grasping them is not enough: practical solutions must also be found.

The next point. Can a capitalist economy develop without militarization? This brings to mind the "economic miracle" in Japan, West Germany and Italy - although it is true that when the "miracle" is over, they switched to militarism again.

But here one should examine the degree to which this switch was rooted in the substantive laws governing the operation of contemporary monopoly capital and the role played by extraneous factors - the "contagious example" of the U.S. military-industrial complex, the Cold War and its spirit, considerations of prestige, the desire to have one's own "mailed fist" to be able to talk to one's competitors in a language understood to them, and the intention to back one's economic invasion of the Third World with power politics.

Whatever the actual reasons, there was a period when the modern capitalist economy developed rapidly in several countries whose arms spending was minimal. The relevant historical experience is available.

This issue can also be considered from a different angle, the other way round.

Ever since the war, the U.S. economy has been oriented and dependent on militarism which at first seemed even to stimulate it. But then this senseless and socially useless squandering of resources led to an astronomical national debt and to other problems and maladies.

In the final analysis it has turned out that supermilitarization increasingly aggravates the domestic situation and upsets the economies of other countries.

The recent panic on the New York Stock Exchange and on other stock exchanges across the world - a panic without precedent in almost 60 years - is a grave symptom and a grave warning.

The third point: the inequitable, exploitative relations with the developing countries. For all the fantastic innovations in the creation of an "alternative (man-made) environment," developed capitalism has been and will be unable to do without these countries' resources. That is an objective fact.

The calls for severing the historically shaped world economic ties are dangerous and offer no solution.

But the neocolonialist methods of using the resources of others, the arbitrary practices of the transnational corporations, the debt-related bondage, the debts that are nearing the trillion-dollar mark and obviously cannot be repaid, also lead to an impasse.

All this gives rise to acute problems within the capitalist countries themselves too. The numerous speculations on this score are essentially aimed at making the Third World a kind of scapegoat and blaming it for many difficulties - including the falling living standards - in the metropolitan countries.

Time and again attempts are made to "rally the nation together" on a chauvinistic basis, to lure the working people into a "partnership" in the exploitation of other countries, while making the masses accept the policy of latter-day capitalist modernization.

However, none of these or similar stratagems can do away with the problem itself. They can only mitigate it temporarily. Inequitable trade remains a fact that will eventually culminate in an explosion. It appears that Western leaders are beginning to understand that this outcome is a distinct possibility - but so far, they have been merely trying to resort to various stop-gap measures.

Indeed, the novelty of the international economic and political processes of our time has not yet been fully grasped and assimilated.

Yet, this will have to be done because the ongoing processes have the force of an objective law: either a disaster or a joint quest for a new economic order taking into account the interests of all on an equal basis.

The way to establishing such an order, as we see it today, has become discernible: through implementing the **"disarmament-for-development"** concept.

Thus, when looking for an answer to our third question, too, we see that the situation does not seem to defy resolution. In this area as well contradictions can be modified. But this necessitates understanding reality and mapping out practical actions in the spirit of the new thinking.

And this, in turn, will facilitate the advance towards a more secure world. In a nutshell, here as well we are facing a historic choice dictated by the laws of our largely interconnected and integral world.

There is another important, even decisive, fact. Socialism is a component of this world. Having embarked on its history 70 years ago and then grown into a world system, it has in fact determined the character of the 20th century. Today it is entering a new stage in its development, demonstrating, once again, its inherent potentialities.

Think, for instance, of the vast potentialities for peaceful coexistence inherent in the Soviet Union's perestroika alone.

By making it possible for us to attain the world level in all major economic indicators, perestroika will enable our vast and wealthy country to become involved in the world division of labour and resources in a way never known before.

Its great scientific, technological and production potential will become a far more substantial component of world economic relations.

This will decisively broaden and strengthen the material base of the all-embracing system of peace and international security. And

that, by the way, is another highly important aspect of perestroika, the place it is assigned in contemporary civilization.

The class struggle and other manifestations of social contradictions will influence the objective processes favouring peace. The advanced forces of the working-class movement are looking for ways to raise its political awareness.

They have to carry on their activities in a highly complicated, new and changing situation. The questions of safeguarding the economic rights and interests of the masses, and indeed those related to the struggle for democracy, including democracy in production, have acquired a new meaning.

For instance, workers are sometimes offered a "partnership," but it is a partnership under which access to the sanctum of business is shut off for them and free election of the top-level managerial personnel is out of the question.

The Western world abounds in "theories" treating of the disappearance of the working class, and claiming that it has become completely dissolved in the "middle class," socially changed, and so on and so forth. True, the changes undergone by the working class are substantial and far-reaching. But it is to no purpose that its class adversary is seeking consolation in this and trying to disorient and confuse the working-class movement.

The working class, a numerically predominant force today within its new social boundaries, has the potential to play a decisive role, especially at abrupt turning points in history.

The motives for that may be different. One of the most probable ones is the insane militarization of the economy. The transition to a new phase of the technological revolution on militarist grounds may serve as a powerful catalyst, especially as it paves the way to war, thus affecting all sections of the population and taking mass protests beyond the limits of economic demands.

Therefore here too the ruling class, the masters of monopoly capital, will have to make a choice. It is our belief, and it is confirmed by science, that at the present level of technology and organization of production, the reconversion and demilitarization of the economy are feasible. This would be tantamount to opting for peace.

The same concerns the consequences of the crisis in relations between the developed and the developing worlds. If things come to the verge of an explosion and it proves no longer possible to enjoy the benefits of exploiting the Third World, the unacceptable and inadmissible character of a system which cannot exist otherwise may acquire a political dimension, and very acutely at that.

In sum, in this sense too capitalism is facing a limited choice - either to let things reach the breaking point or to heed the laws of the interconnected and integral world, one that calls for a balance of interests on an equal basis.

The situation, as we see it, makes this not only necessary, but possible too. The more so as forces in the Third World are acting along the same lines.

The decline of the national liberation movement is a common phrase. However, what apparently happens is that concepts are substituted and the novelty of the situation is ignored.

As far as the impulse for liberation is concerned, the one that was present at the stage of the struggle for political independence, it is certainly waning. And this is only natural.

As for the impulse essential to the new, current stage of the Third World's development, it is only nascent. One has to be aware of this and refrain from yielding to pessimism.

The factors that make up the impulse are varied and far from simple. Among them is a powerful economic process which sometimes takes on paradoxical forms. For instance, certain countries, while retaining some features of backwardness, are attaining a great-power level in the world economy and politics.

There is also a rise in political vigour as nations are formed and genuine nation-states, among which an important place is held by countries with revolutionary regimes, are consolidated.

There is also the wrath bred by the dramatic polarization of poverty and wealth, and the contrast between possibilities and realities.

An urge for national identity and initiative makes itself increasingly felt in the organizations reflecting the processes of interstate consolidation among the developing countries.

To a greater or lesser extent this is characteristic of all the organizations, and their number is not small - the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the ASEAN, the Organization of American States, the Latin American Economic System, the South Pacific Forum, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and, especially, the non-aligned movement.

They represent a wide spectrum of conflicting interests, needs, aspirations, ideologies, claims and prejudices typical of precisely this stage. Although they have already turned into a noticeable factor in world politics, none of them has yet fully revealed its potentialities. But the potentialities are colossal, and it is even hard to predict what they will yield in the coming 50 years.

One thing is clear: this is a world of its own, seeking organizational forms for effective and equitable participation in solving problems common to the whole of humankind. It stands for two and a half billion people.

One can envision the gigantic strides it will make not only in exerting its influence on world politics, but also in playing an original role in shaping the world economy of the future.

For all their might, it is not the transnationals that will determine the Third World's development; it is more likely that they will be forced to adjust to the independent choice that has been or will be made by the peoples.

The peoples and the organizations representing them have a stake in the new world economic order.

There is another important point to be made. In the last few decades, development within the capitalist world proper has given rise to new forms of social contradictions and movements.

Among them are movements to remove the nuclear threat, protect the environment, eliminate racial discrimination, rule out policies dividing society into the privileged and the underprivileged, prevent the disaster threatening industrial areas that have fallen victim to present-day capitalist modernization.

These movements involve millions of people and are inspired and led by prominent figures in science and culture, people enjoying national and international prestige.

Social democratic, socialist and labour parties and mass organizations similar to or connected with them continuously play an important role in the political processes in a number of countries, and the influence of some of them is increasing.

Thus, according to all economic, political and social indications everywhere in today's world the thesis Lenin regarded as one of the most profound in Marxism is being vindicated: as the thoroughness of the historical action grows, the mass whose action it is will grow as well.

And this is always an unmistakable sign and the most powerful factor of social progress and, consequently, of peace.

Indeed, the grandeur and novelty of our time is determined by the peoples' increasingly obvious and open presence in the foreground of history. Their present position is such that they must be heeded immediately rather than in the long run.

The new truth thereby brought into sharp focus is that a constant need to make a choice is increasingly characteristic of historical advancement as we are about to enter the 21st century. And the right choice depends on the extent to which the interests and aspirations of hundreds of millions of people are heeded.

Hence the politicians' responsiblity. For policy can only be effective if the novelty of the time is taken into account - today the human factor figures on the political plane not as a remote and more or less spontaneous side-effect on the life, activity and intentions of the masses. It directly invades world affairs.

Unless this is realized, in other words, unless the new thinking, one based on current realities and the peoples' will, is adopted, politics turn into an unpredictable improvization posing a risk both to one's own country and to other nations. Such politics have no lasting support.

Such are the reasons for our optimistic view of the future, of the prospects of creating an all-embracing system of international security.

This is the logic behind our stand on defence issues, too. As long as there is a danger of war and as long as the drive for social revanche forms the core of Western strategies and militarist programmes, we shall continue to do everything necessary to maintain our defence capability at a level ruling out imperialism's military superiority over socialism.

Comrades, during these jubilee days, we duly commend the accomplishments of the world communist movement.

The October Revolution, which has retained to this day its international momentum, is the source of the movement's viability.

The world communist movement grows and develops upon the soil of each of the countries concerned, but there is something that the image of a Communist has in common, no matter what his nationality is, no matter what country he works in.

It is loyalty to the idea of the best, communist society, loyalty to the working people - above all the working class, and struggle for their vital interests, for peace and democracy.

I feel this anniversary is the right occasion to mention the Third, Communist International. The truth about it has yet to be restored in full, and its authentic and complete history has yet to be written.

For all the drawbacks and errors in its activities and for all the bitterness the recollection of certain chapters in its history may evoke, the Communist International is part of our movement's great past.

Born of the October Revolution, the movement has turned into a school of internationalism and revolutionary brotherhood. And more - it has made internationalism an effective instrument furthering the interests of the working people and promoting the social progress of big and small nations.

It has produced true knights of the 20th century, men of honour and responsibility, of lofty aspirations and unflinching courage, who took the suffering of the millions of oppressed all over the world as their own, who heard their pleas and roused them to struggle.

Communists were the first to sound the alarm about the danger of fascism and the first to rise against it; they were also its first victims. They came from all over the world to Spain to be the first to engage in an armed struggle against fascism.

They were the first to raise the banner of Resistance in the name of the freedom and national dignity of their peoples. It was Communists, above all Soviet Communists, who made a decisive contribution to the crushing defeat of fascism in World War II.

Later, and today too, Communists have shown the same irreconcilability and courage as front-rank fighters against reaction and obscurantism of every hue.

They are people of legendary heroism and dedication. There are thousands upon thousands of them, organized and united by a single will, iron discipline, and commitment to their ideals.

The time of the Communist International, the Information Bureau, even the time of binding international conferences is over. But the world communist movement lives on.

All parties are completely and irreversibly independent. We declared that as early as the 20th Congress. True, the old habits were not discarded at once. But today this has become an unalterable reality.

In this sense, too, the 27th Congress of the CPSU was a final and irrevocable turning point. I think this has been actually proved by our relations with fraternal parties in the course of perestroika.

The world communist movement is at a turning point, just as is world progress itself and its motive forces.

The Communist parties are looking for their new place in the context of the profound changes unfolding as we are about to enter a new century. Their international movement is undergoing a renewal, united by respect for the similarly renewed principles of confidence, equality and sincere solidarity.

The movement is open to dialogue, cooperation, interaction and alliance with any other revolutionary, democratic and progressive forces.

The CPSU has no doubts about the future of the communist movement as one that offers an alternative to capitalism and involves the most valiant and consistent fighters for peace, for their countries' independence and progress, for friendship between the world's peoples.

Comrades, the emergence of the world socialist system is the most important landmark in world history since the October Revolution. It is 40 years since socialism became the common destiny of many nations and a most important factor of contemporary civilization.

Our Party and the Soviet people highly appreciate the opportunity of cooperating with our friends who, just like us, have assumed state responsibility for socialism and its advancement for several decades now.

All the socialist states have accumulated a lot of interesting and useful experience of solving social, economic and ideological tasks and building a new life.

The socialist system and its well-tried quests and experiencie are of importance to the whole of mankind.

It has offered to the world its own answers to the main questions of human existence, and evolved humanitarian and collectivist values centred on the working man.

The socialist system instills in him a sense of dignity, a feeling of being master of his country, of being well-protected socially and confident of the future. It secures for him broad access to knowledge and culture, and creates conditions for putting the individual's abilities and gifts to good use.

We all take pride in what has been achieved by the peoples in socialist countries, especially because it is, among other things, an outcome of many years of fruitful cooperation, a result of the unprecedentedly broad, open and truly fraternal communication between these countries' citizens, party and public organizations, production teams, professional unions, cultural establishments, a result of family and personal ties, and of the joint work and study of thousands upon thousands of people.

The heights reached enable us to have a clearer view of many things. Life has corrected our notions of the laws and rates of transition to socialism, our understanding of the role of socialism in the world community.

It would never occur to us to claim that all the progressive changes in the world are due to socialism alone.

However, the way the problems of vital importance to humankind have been posed, the way solutions to them are being sought show that there is an inseparable link between world progress and socialism as an international force.

This link is brought into particularly sharp focus by the effort to avert nuclear catastrophe and by such a balance of world forces which enables various peoples to more successfully uphold the socio-political choice they have made.

The accumulated experience has ensured a better possibility of building relations between socialist countries on the following universally recognized principles:

- unconditional and full equality;
- the ruling party's responsibility for the state of affairs in the country; its patriotic service to the people;
- concern for the common cause of socialism;
- respect for one another; a serious attitude to what has been achieved and tested by one's friends; voluntary and diverse cooperation;

- a strict observance of the principles of peaceful coexistence by all.

This is what the practice of socialist internationalism rests on.

Today the socialist world appears before us in all its national and social variety. This is good and useful. We have satisfied ourselves that unity does not mean identity and uniformity. We have also become convinced of there being no "model" of socialism to be emulated by everyone.

The totality and quality of actual successes scored in restructuring society for the sake of the working people is the criterion of socialism's development at each stage and in each country.

We are aware of the damage that can be done to relations between socialist countries by a weakening of internationalist principles, by a departure from the principle of mutual benefit and mutual assistance, by a neglect of the common interests of socialism on the international scene.

We are gratified to state that of late our realtions with all socialist states have become more dynamic and are being perfected. And cooperation in the framework of the Warsaw Treaty and CMEA certainly has become more fruitful and workmanlike, which incidentally does not set their member countries in any essential way apart from other socialist countries.

The 27th Congress clearly defined the CPSU's position - in politics and all other areas of our interaction with every socialist country, ensuring the combination of mutual interests with the interests of socialism as a whole is of decisive importance.

The strengthening of friendship and utmost development of cooperation with socialist countries is the top-priority goal of the Soviet Union's foreign policy.

We welcome the delegates from the socialist countries and, through them, extend our greetings to the nations they represent.

Dear comrades,

Distinguished foreign guests,

In all our thoughts and deeds we have been inspired by the invigorating force of communist ideas. Inscribed on the banner of the Revolution, they inspired to struggle and labour millions of people who held them sacred, regarding them as the purpose and meaning of their life.

The people's labour and struggle, their unabated perseverance in striving for their freely chosen goal, their joys and sufferings have become embodied in the reality of today's socialism advancing along the road of revolutionary perestroika. In this lies the force of the October Revolution, a revolution that continues.

For 70 years now the Soviet people has been led by their well-tried vanguard, the Leninist Party.

The Party and revolution, the Party and the October Revolution are inseparable!

The victory of the socialist revolution would have been impossible without a party equipped with the Marxist-Leninist theory. There would be no socialism and we would not have a great country without a party that has learned to shape a new society.

Nor would we have a base for the present renewal of all the aspects of social life and for the country's accelerated socio-economic development.

It is the imperative of the day that under the new conditions, too, the Party should take the lead in revolutionary renewal, enhancing, perseveringly and consistently, the effectiveness of its policy and promoting democratization in all areas and at all levels of social life.

That the Party's role should grow is natural. But words and formal rituals have little to do with it.

The Party's role is determined by the depth and honesty of analysis and assessment, by well-thought-out policies and resolute action, by the ability to correlate the particular and the general, the personal and the social, today and the long-term.

It is determined by the heightened responsibility of all Party organizations and of each Communist for the state of affairs in society.

Our Party has a membership of some 20 million, which equals one tenth of the country's adult population. It is an enormous force. However, the potential of the Party's influence, the Party's impact on perestroika has not yet been fully brought into play.

The preparation for and holding of the 19th National Party Conference should give a powerful impetus to improving the complicated and intricate work along these lines.

Today the fate of the great cause of the revolution, of the great Leninist cause is in our hands. Again, we are blazing the trail. And this imposes special responsibility on the Party, on all of us.

To put it in Lenin's phrase, "the time of revolution is a time of action, of action from both above and below."

This is the tradition that has been carried on by the party of a new type since its inception. This is also a requirement faced by the vanguard of Soviet society at the present highly complicated and at the same time inspiringly novel stage in socialism's development.

Comrades, in 1917 humanity crossed the threshold to embark on its true history. However, the past 70 years, the economic upheavals and social cataclysms that generated fascism and World War II, as well as the Cold War, the arms race, the threat of thermonuclear catastrophe and global crises have shown that the past still has a considerable part of humanity in its grip.

And yet we are justified in regading the time we live in, the juncture between the 20th and the 21st centuries, to be unique in terms of profound social changes and the global scope of the tasks that face the peoples of the world.

We can see today that humanity is not really doomed to always live the way it did before October 1917. Socialism has evolved into a powerful, growing and developing reality. It is the October Revolution and socialism that show humankind the road to the future and identify the new values of truly human relations:

- collectivism instead of egoism;
- freedom and equality instead of exploitation and oppression;
- the true power of the people instead of the tyranny of the few;
- the growing role of reason and humanism instead of the spontaneous and cruel play of social forces;
- humankind's unity and peace instead of discord, strife and war.

The present generation, and not only that in our country, is responsible for the fate of civilization and life on earth. It is this generation that will determine, in the long run, whether the beginning of a new millennium in world history will be the latter's tragic epilogue or whether it will signal an inspiring prologue to the future.

Slightly more than thirteen years are left before the beginning of the 21st century. In the year 2017 the Soviet people and the whole of progressive humanity will mark the centenary of the Great October Revolution.

What is the world going to be like when it reaches our Revolution's centenary? What is socialism going to be like? What degree of maturity will have been attained by the world community of states and peoples? Let us not indulge in guessing. But let us remember that the foundations for the future are being laid today.

It is our duty to preserve our inimitable civilization and life on Earth, to help reason win over nuclear insanity, and to create all the necessary conditions for the free and all-round developoment of the individual and the whole of humanity.

We are aware that there is a possibility for continuous progress. We realize that it is not easy to ensure it. But this does not frighten us. On the contrary, this inspires us, giving a lofty and humane purpose to our life and injecting it with a profound meaning.

In October 1917 we parted with the old world, rejecting it once and for all. We are moving towards a new world, the world of communism. We shall never turn off that road.

(Mikhail Gorbachev's report was followed with keen attention and repeatedly punctuated by applause.)

(Pravda, November 3, 1987)

That untarnishing word, Revolution

Mikhail Gorbachev's new book "Perestroika and New Thinking for Our Country and the World."

Written in an honest and confident manner and a lively conversational style, the book is intended for the general reader. A policy line should be set forth in lucid and unambiguous terms; it finds its expression in resolutions, decisions, reports; but if a policy is free of conceit and complacency, then it seeks broad understanding and serious, conscious and sincere, rather than formal and ostentatious, support - and gets across to most people. "For their part, people are seeking to define their stand with regard to the problems besetting mankind, and to ascertain their further line of action" (this and subsequent quotations are from the book. - **I.D.**). The policy of socialism aims at reducing the number of "mechanical citizens" to a minimum, at having everyone understand "what we have gone through, what is happening today, and what we are striving for," and at ensuring a realistic perception of life "in all its contradiction and complexity." "There are no rehearsals for history," the book says. "It cannot be re-enacted." This is true: we - everyone of us and the whole nation - live without rehearsals and "write our lives out fair," so to say. This makes all the greater the responsibility borne by the people for what is being done before them and for what they take part in. This is why our past misfortunes and tragedies to which the book gives ample space, must be remembered, acknowledged and put in the right perspective so that nothing of the kind ever happens again. There is no forgiving crimes against the people and the party, and monstrous abuses of power.

There are simple truths which, nevertheless, we sometimes need to be reminded. To say that they are self-evident and universally recognized is, by and large, to exaggerate. "The people should know what is good and what is bad in our life so as to promote good and combat evil," Gorbachev writes. This seems obvious enough, but too much evil was swept under the carpet for decades on end, and even passed off as good, as a blessing even. Gorbachev reminds us of Lenin's words: give us more light, let the Party know everything! Today "give us more light" means "give us more truth, more glasnost!"

As he struggles with the vicissitudes of life, man often needs advice, sure support and yardsticks by which to evaluate his ideas and attitudes. Such advice is now available from this book, which presents the Party's ideas in development and motion and anticipates the response to them from various categories of reader - sympathizers and opponents alike.

Gorbachev admits that he likes the phrase "to do better." Indeed, the phrase implies a hope that one can live up to one's potential and make the most of one's abilities. Man can "do better" but Gorbachev makes an important reservation: "The faint-hearted will never do better." He who lacks convictions, knowledge and moral principles, will not do better, he will beat a retreat in the face of difficulties, get entangled in endless compromises and become a slave to them. Hence the task clearly defined in the book: "To gear the entire intellectual potential of society and all that culture can offer to the need to mould a socially active, morally elevated, just and conscientious personality."

Here is another equally simple and vital truth which it has taken us a long time to rediscover: "Each must know and feel that his word is needed, that his dignity is not humiliated, and that he is treated with trust and respect." Given the observance of this social condition one can "do better" indeed.

Faint-heartedness and spiritual wooliness come from half-knowledge, half-truth, and all sorts of inventions and myths. The press and the arts, which are glasnost- and truth-oriented today, are described in the book as a vital instrument in perestroika and the promotion of the "new thinking." The mass media are offering the public at large every opportunity to speak its mind, and the Party wants the "vox populi" sounding in the media "to be a guarantor of democratic control over the correctness of decisions, over their conformity with the interests and requirements of the masses - and ultimately over the implementation of these decisions."

Many readers, especially those whose youth and active life fell on the past thirty years, are certain to find and appreciate in this book honest reflections on their own hopes, misgivings and aspirations connected with the period through which they have lived. The author speaks highly of the 20th CPSU Congress and voices his regret at the abortive and "shelved" reforms of the 1950s and 1960s, and his words are certain to strike a responsive chord in readers' hearts. "A truly paradoxical situation arose where an educated and talented nation loyal to the socialist system failed to make full use of the potential inherent in socialism and of its right to genuine participation in managing the affairs of the state." The nation will not tolerate paradoxes of this sort any longer, and glasnost has revealed this in full: "Workers and peasants have raised their heads, the intelligentsia is adding its influential and insistent voice to their demands," and Gorbachev welcomes this growing sense of responsibility for the future of the country and socialism.

Indeed, much has changed and is changing in the country - even the air we breathe seems to have become purer - but each of us sees, in his own city, town or village, that changes for the better come hard. Perestroika goes against the grain with many people who have already got all they need; they would rather leave well alone, and care little for the welfare of the nation. Others find it hard to free themselves of rigid dogmas. Still others prefer old methods of managing the nation and the state. Therefore, the book reminds us all of the fact that "Life and time are our teachers," and that you cannot ignore the demands of the time and the lessons of history without doing harm to the people, the country, and the cause of socialism. The essence of perestroika lies in the fact that it meets the pressing practical need to "**link socialism with democracy** and restore in full, practically and theoretically, Lenin's concept of socialist construction."

Revolution is a word that cannot fade or tarnish. It is possible that the word perestroika too comes into the class of words that do not wear out with use. Mikhail Gorbachev's book makes it clear that this depends on us.

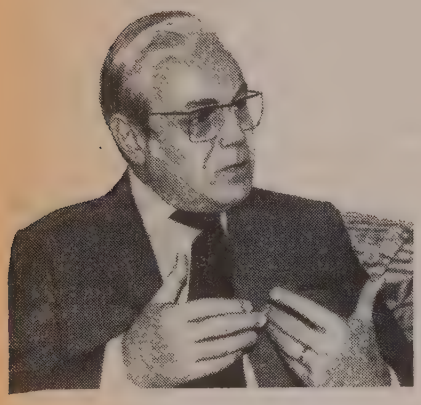
The book, embracing all aspects of our Party's and state's domestic and foreign policy, covers too much ground to be condensed into a brief review. I have only touched upon some of its ideas and themes.

I am sure it will prove of use to everyone as a source of advice and food for thought.

IGOR DEDKOV

"I welcome the new thinking"

U.N. Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuellar replies to New Times questions



What is your assessment of Mr Gorbachev's policy of new political thinking and people-to-people diplomacy? What do you feel about Mr Gorbachev's proposal to extend the principles of glasnost in international relations?

In the life of nations, as in the life of individuals, periodic re-evaluation of policies and philosophies is indispensable. As Socrates said, an unexamined life is not worth living. It is in this context that I welcome the new political thinking. It represents the cornerstone of General Secretary Gorbachev's political agenda. In particular, the central importance he has attributed to the United Nations.

The highest priority must be given to nuclear disarmament. And I welcome warmly the prospect of an agreement between the Soviet Union and the United States, of the abolition of intermediate-range nuclear weapons. I also equally anticipate further agreements on reducing and ultimately abolishing strategic nuclear weapons, so that the world can finally emerge from under the shadow of the nuclear cloud that has hung over it for so long.

More glasnost, more openness in the context of today's international relations can promote greater trust between nations and contribute to a better understanding by one country of another's problems and difficulties. We see today some hopeful signs of growing international cooperation. New opportunities are evident to settle long-standing differences and encourage more positive and fruitful relationships. Despite the current tensions in many parts of the world, I believe there are also opportunities of strengthening peace.

What is your response to Mr Gorbachev's proposal to enhance the role of the United Nations in the international arena?

Naturally, I am delighted that the General Secretary feels that the United Nations has a useful and important role to play in international relations.

Ever since I became secretary-general I have constantly appealed to all governments to contribute effectively to strengthening the role of the United Nations in international affairs. I have made specific recommendations as to how best member states can utilize the machinery of the Security Council in the resolution of conflicts as well in the peaceful settlement of disputes.

I feel sure that when that machinery is effectively used, the potential and actual conflicts can be contained and ended. I feel that if unity is shown by the members of the Security Council to end the long and tragic conflict that is now raging between two member states, Iran and Iraq, it will be possible to bring about solutions to other long-standing problems. That will be further evidence of my strong conviction that the United Nations can play a central role in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Our organization also has to be in the forefront of developmental efforts in the economic and social fields. Much has to be done in preserving the environment, in halting the spread of diseases, particularly AIDS, in caring for refugees and victims of disasters, in promoting respect for human rights, in curbing the spread of delinguent crime, and so on, to make our world not only more secure but also a better place to live in.

I have been greatly heartened to find that the General Secretary's concept of a comprehensive system of international security foresees a prominent role for multilateral organizations. In building a steady foundation for a secure world, it is becoming more and more unrealistic to see the major challenges and threats confronting the international community within the purely national framework.

To apply the unprecedented knowledge and technology now available for the common weal and in the interests of our common security requires the international cooperation foreseen in the U.N. Charter and strong multilateral institutions through which such cooperation can be developed and channelled.

The United Nations is indispensable for this purpose, that is, in the settlement of disputes it needs a strong and sustained support of all its members.

Would you like to use this opportunity to address the Soviet people on the occasion of their national holiday?

The 1917 revolution has led to the creation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It was a significant historic event on both the national and international scale. It was the starting point of new experience in economic, political, social and cultural activities, first for the people of the Soviet Union, but also for the people of other countries. The 70th anniversary celebrations are an opportunity to reflect again on the purposes of the revolution and to strengthen the resolve to achieve peace in the face of conflicts among nations and to eliminate poverty, hunger, illiteracy and other social ills that cast a shadow over the future of humanity.

I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express my best wishes to the people of the Soviet Union on this most auspicious occasion.

Interviewer ARKADY SIDORUK

ARCHIMEDE'S LEVER

ALEXANDER PUMPYANSKY

Mikhail Gorbachev's letter to President Reagan put an end to speculation worldwide. The Soviet-American summit is to take place. Its agenda and its concept have been agreed on. An accord on the abolition of medium and shorter-range missiles will be signed. The foundations are to be laid for the next agreement - on a 50 per cent cut in strategic offensive weapons.

It must be admitted that such an announcement had been expected a little earlier - during Secretary of State Shultz's visit to Moscow on October 22-23. However, Shevardnadze had to make a surprise flying visit to Washington a week later. Why?

It turned out that the negotiations were a two-act and not a one-act play. And in the interval, happily a short one, audience and participants alike were chewing their nails. Politics, we learned, also have their story, and it is one that is not short on suspense.

But the real suspense is to be found elsewhere.

Let us examine the events in a wider context.

The preparations for the third Gorbachev-Reagan summit have been made. The foundations are being laid for their fourth meeting. Such a course of events would have been hard to imagine even a short while ago.

Eduard Shevardnadze and George Shultz meet in Moscow.
Photo by Anatoly Khrupov

Just two years ago a most dangerous trend was dominant - the two great powers were hardly on speaking terms, which did not mean that there was no mud-slinging between them. The Geneva meeting halted this trend. At long last a dialogue was started on reasonable terms.

A year later came the Reykjavik surprise. It seemed to have ended in failure. Not a single agreement was signed in the Icelandic capital. But today we can see clearly that it was the most fruitful of failures. A strategic breakthrough! After Reykjavik the very nature of East-West discussions changed. The idea of nuclear disarmament was transformed from a utopian dream into a workable project.

The Washington meeting in December will produce the first practical result - the agreement to destroy two classes of nuclear missiles. And that means hundreds upon hundreds of warheads to be removed from Europe. But at the same time that is only 3 per cent of world nuclear stockpiles. What next?

Next, another summit, in the first half of next year - the fourth, and this time in Moscow. After that, we should like to hope, strategic arsenals will be cut by half. And, after having reached a more precisely definition of their interpretation of the ABM treaty, the two sides will agree on the principle of not deploying weapons in space. I repeat, we should like to hope. And the formula of the agreement announced in Washington provides reasonable grounds for such hopes.

But what had changed in the course of one short week to make possible in Washington what had been impossible in Moscow? The question, I think, is incorrectly put. Between the Moscow and the Washington round of talks there is an obvious continuity, although there are some finer shades as well.

Talks as complex as those between the Soviet Union and the United States are no mere exchanges of courtesies. They are at once a search for compromise and a crossing of swords. In this case, as far as I understand, swords clashed on the issue of the concept of a summit meeting and the agenda for further Soviet-American contacts.

The Soviet side sought to make it as productive as possible. That dictated its tactics at the negotiations.

A summit meeting is an Archimedes' lever in world politics. Moscow proceeds from the belief that it must be exploited to the full.

In the interval between Moscow and Washington, presidential adviser Frank Carlucci, who had accompanied Shultz on his mission, said by way of explanation that the Russians - Gorbachev - had raised the stakes. To tell the truth, I see nothing wrong in this description. Lowering the stakes, making do with what can already be achieved today would have been wrong. It was essential to make sure that the agreement prepared on the future of medium- and shorter-range missiles should be the first, but by no means last step on the road to nuclear disarmament and that, after it, historic agreements should not be postponed indefinitely. Time is running short not just because the arms race had gone far beyond all conceivable limits, and every moment of the nuclear age is fraught with dangerous suprises, but also for the simple reason that the present U.S. administration has only a year to go, and no Cassandra today would undertake to predict what will happen after the presidential elections in November 1988. So it is necessary to reach an agreement with the present Washington administration. And the sooner the better. ■

The Red Army man Sang Fuyang

Chinese Volunteers Fought for Soviet Power

During the winter of 1917-18 four members of the security guard at the Smolny, the headquarters of the October Revolution, where Lenin worked, were Chinese. The group was headed by Li Fuqing.

At the time of the revolution there were, according to various sources, between 200,000 and 500,000 Chinese on the territory of Soviet Russia. Most of them had been recruited by the tsarist government during the first world war as cheap manpower to augment Russia's labour force. They worked in Moscow and Petrograd, in the Urals, the Donbas, in the North, in Siberia and the Far East.

Most of them sided wholeheartedly with the revolution. And the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks) responded by placing its trust in them. Some Chinese Communists were actually members of underground organizations of the Party. One of a group of 46 Bolsheviks captured by the Japanese interventionists in July 1920 at Shishkino, near Chita, was a Chinese national - Li Xifa. Most of the group were summarily short, Li Xifa among them.

Chinese internationalists were elected to local Soviets. Lao Xiuzhao (Liu Zerong) and Xiu Cai, both workers' leaders well known in Russia, were elected to the Petrograd Soviet. Lii Xichang and Diang Zongchang took part in the work of state bodies of the Far Eastern Republic (the "buffer" state between Soviet Russia and Japan in 1920-22).

In December 1918, on Lenin's initiative, the All-Russia Union of Chinese Workers was founded in Petrograd. It had a membership of more than 50,000 with branches in all the towns in Soviet Russia where there were Chinese workers. At a plenary meeting of the Moscow Soviet in February 1919, a delegate from the Moscow branch of the Union made this statement: **"The time has come for the behests of the International to be carried out not only by the proletariat of the West but also by the proletariat of the East. The Chinese workers went to learn from you new methods of social struggle so as to adopt all that is applicable to life in China."**

In one of the documents of the Eastern Division of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (R.S.F.S.R.) the Union of Chinese Workers is described as a **"lawfully registered proletarian organization operating on the territory of the R.S.F.S.R.; in this organization, there has emerged a Communist nucleus, it publishes a Communist paper, The Chinese Worker, conducts propaganda not only in Russia but also in China, and works hand in hand with the Workers' and Peasants' Government."**

On November 19, 1919, Lenin received Lau Xiuzhao, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Chinese Workers, and questioned him about the life of the Chinese and the activities of their Union. He took the credential issued Lau Xiuzhao by the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs on October 7, 1919, and wrote on it: **"For my part I kindly ask all Soviet institutions and authorities to render Comrade Lau Xiuzhao every assistance. Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars V. Ulyanov (Lenin), Nov. 19, 1919."**

A Bolshevik organization functioned actively in the Central Executive Committee of the Union. There were Communist cells also in the local branches of the Union of Chinese Workers in Samara, Saratov, Yekaterinburg, Verkhneudinsk, Petrograd, the Ukraine and Central Asia. To provide guidance for the Chinese Communist sections a Central organizational bureau of Chinese Communists was set up on June 25, 1920, at the Central Committee of the RCP (B). Its members were Ang Nenghak, Zhao Yonglu, and Gang Beifu. The following day the Communist delegates to the third congress of the Union of Chinese Workers sent a letter to Lenin. **"The Russian socialist republic,"** it said, **"is a bulwark of strength and hope for us. We shall win freedom for the Chinese workers and peasants, and then the 500 million working people of China will stretch out a hand to the proletariat of Russia."**

In 1918-22 detachments and units of Chinese volunteers sprang up on all the fronts of the civil war and merged with the Red Army. On the initiative of the Chinese Communists, a headquarters for the formation of Chinese detachments throughout the territory of the R.S.F.S.R. was set up in Moscow in the autumn of 1918. Its representatives worked in all the cities of Soviet Russia where Chinese nationals lived. The commissar of the headquarters was the Communist Sheng Chenghuo.

Recommending him for decoration with the Order of the Red Banner, Nikolai Podvoisky, a member of the Supreme Military Council of the Soviet Republic, wrote: **"Comrade Sheng Chenghuo was an outstanding organizer of Chinese Red Army and internationalist units. Together with these units he fought gallantly in numerous operations and battles defending the R.S.F.S.R. against onslaughts by German imperialism, White Cossack and Petlyura bands against the Czechoslovak corps, Kolchak and other hirelings of the Entente."**

With the Red Army...

The first Chinese battalion was formed by the young Communist Sang Fuyang at the end of 1917 in the Dniester area and became part of the Tiraspol unit of the Red Army then just coming into being.

In fierce battles the Tiraspol unit fought its way from the frontiers of Romania, through the whole of the Ukraine to Soviet Russia. On May 9, 1918, Pravda published an appeal "To All Revolutionary Chinese Socialists." Signed by Sang Fuyang, it urged them to join the ranks of the Red Army. Sang Fuyang himself fought valiantly and was killed in action near Novocherkassk at the end of 1918.

Some 50,000 Chinese fighting men took part in battles on the Southern Front near Tiraspol and Tsaritsyn, in the Ukraine, with the famous Chapayev division in Vladikavkaz, on the Volga, on the Eastern Front, in the ranks of the partisans in Siberia and the Far East, and in the heroic raids on the rear of the White Cossacks carried out by the Urals partisan army under the command of Vasily Blukher. No few instances of their bravery and valour have gone down in history. The exploits of the remarkable Communist internationalist, Pao Tisang, and his comrade-in-arms in the Vladikavkaz Chinese Volunteer Battalion were legendary. When in August 1918 the Whites broke into Vladikavkaz, they were met by Chinese fighting men who engaged them in street battles. The Chinese stole by night into White guard positions and attacked them with grenades. In battle they would hold their fire until the attackers were no more than ten paces away. When forced to retreat, they invariably took their killed and wounded with them. The fighting at Vladikavkaz lasted for eleven days. The Whiteguards

finally withdrew after having suffered hundreds of casualties.

Pao Tisang fought on the Terek, in the Kuban, on the Volga, on the Don and in Siberia. After the civil war, he commanded a Moslem cavalry division of the Red Army and fought the counterrevolutionary bands in Central Asia. In 1924 he went to China where he fell in battles for the freedom of his native land.

When the Chinese fighting men who had fought under him transferred to Pao Tisang's force, partisan commander Tretyakov said he was sorry to see them go. "They were splendid, reliable lads," he said. "And although their Russian was not so good, we always understood each other and, what is more, we trusted each other."

Interesting, too, is the story of Fang Shuose, a Chinese from Shandong, who served with a detachment of workers from the Ugryum goldfields which was commanded by Andrei Dimov and known as the Golden Hundred. In 1920 when the partisans after heavy fighting were forced to retreat, with 300 wounded, to the frontier river Argun, Fang Shuose found a way out of the critical situation. He crossed over to the Chinese side, and persuaded the Chinese border patrol to allow the wounded to be taken by boat to the Amur and on to Blagoveshchensk.

"The knowledge that we were serving the October Revolution gave us strength," Chinese volunteer Yao Xinchen was to relate later. And, recalling one episode in the fighting that was seared in his memory, he said: "I can still see the faces of the Red Army men who, with loud cheers, charged the Whiteguards and saved our lives. They picked us up from the ground where we lay with frozen hands and feet, loaded us into carts, embraced us. After all, we were brothers."

The Chinese battalion's headquarters in the Urals. 1918.

"Member of the Russian Communist Party..."

The Chinese Communists fought for the Soviet Republic not only on the battlefield. In the hungry year of 1922 they collected donations for famine relief both among Chinese living in Russia and in China proper. I have before me hitherto unpublished document: a report on the work of the Chinese Communist section of the Petrograd organization of the RCP(B) for October 1922. In it we read:

"Among other current business the last meeting heard a report on the arrival in Moscow from China of trains with 60 carloads of food collected by the famine-relief commission in Peking. It is proposed to send this food mostly to the Saratov or Samara gubernia."

The report bears the signature of Zhu Wangfu, secretary of the Chinese section.

Chinese Communists in Soveit Russia helped to establish contact with the organizations of the Communist Party of China, which was founded in the summer of 1921. The CPC sent its members to the Far Eastern Republic to work among the Chinese there, in particular to organize their combat detachments, which subsequently merged with the Red Army. In their turn, Chinese Communists in Russia went to China, joined the CPC and returned to Russia to fight for the victory of the revolution.

One of the documents in the archives of the Amur Regional Committee of the CPSU is a 1922 list of the members of Communist cells in the Amur regional Union of Chinese Workers "possessing Party membership cards or identification papers issued by the Communist Party of China" (the reference here is evidently to CPC organizations in Chinese cities. - **A.K.**). Among the 15 names listed is that of Lii Xichang, a 23-year-old worker born in a working-class family in Shandong Province. From February 1920 he lived in the Soviet Far East. That same year he organized a communist section and worked at the Regional Committee of the Party. Further the record states that he **"still works both in the section and in the Union of Chinese Workers.... Has identification paper issued by the Communist Party of China in Peking dated December 2, 1921. Does not have a CPC membership card yet since still is a member of the Russian Communist Party."**

Here are some more particulars about some of the Chinese Communists whose names figure in the list.

"Ying Shuochang, 32, worker. Works in the Union of Chinese Workers since April 1921, was its secretary and chairman. In 1922 was sent to the Eastern Front. Has a mandate from CPC in Peking, dated December 22, 1921, No. 2, to handle and organize military affairs, and another from Hankou dated May 6, 1922, No. 17. Has no CPC membership card since is a member of the Russian Communist Party."

"Wang Renghei, 25, secretary of a Communist cell, Shenxi Province. Student of Peking University, in 1921 put out the political newspapers (illegible) in Peking, works at present in the section and the Union. Has Party membership card No. 7, dated November 1921."

The schooling in international brotherhood the Chinese comrades went through during the civil war left its mark. Indicative is this document from the Party archives of the Institute of History of the Moscow Committee and the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU:

"To the Board of the Chinese 'Regeneration of China' Society.

"From Chinese citizen
Zou Shitong, 8, Ostozhenka,
Laundry

"In reply to the provocative action of the Chinese militarists and the seizure of the Chinese Eastern Railway, I wish to join the ranks of the Red Army as a volunteer.

"For your information I wish to say that in 1919 I served for about six months in the Red Army in a partisan detachment in the town of Nerchinsk.
August 12, 1929.

Zou Shitong."

Soviet people cherish the memory of the heroic exploits of the Chinese internationalist volunteers, the known and unknown heroes who fought to defend the gains of the October Revolution.

ANASTASIA KARTUNOVA,
D. Sc. (Hist.)

A dialogue between the churches

Metropolitan Filaret on his meeting with representatives of the Vatican

"...Vatican and Russian Orthodox Church conduct a dialogue on disarmament and perestroika...." "Pope John Paul II and Filaret say NO to militarization of outer space...."

Leading Italian papers as well as Vatican radio and television reported this news immediately after the negotiations between the delegations from the Russian Orthodox Church and the Vatican had drawn to a close in Venice.

Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev and Galicia, who led the Russian Orthodox delegation, granted the following interview to our observer BORIS KOZLOV.

It was not the first time we had met - the dialogue between the Roman Catholic and the Russian Orthodox Churches on their role in the modern world in fact began twenty years ago. We had met and talked both in Italy and in the Soviet Union. The discussions revealed many pressing problems that still remain unsolved, one of them being how the churches and believers should react to the numerous social, political and moral changes now in progress worldwide. At the same time, it is obvious that for all the theological and historical differences between them, both churches can already cooperate effectively in seeking solutions to social and other problems, even in a situation where growing hopes are still marred by lack of confidence and even by mutual mistrust.

- What specific conclusions were drawn this time in Venice?

- We agreed to continue to look into practical ways of consolidating the family and resolving other social problems, such as rampant drug addiction.... The principles shared by both churches demand that we should concentrate on the spiritual and moral education of man and society. And this is good groundwork for cooperation with other individuals and social groups also wishing to uphold the moral values of society.

- On previous occasions you discussed predominantly religious subjects, whereas now the range of subjects under discussion has broadened....

- When faced with a common danger, people inevitably draw closer together.... A few years ago our dialogue was interrupted. The venomous attacks against the U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries made by the Vatican in its document on "liberation theology" evoked an extremely critical response at political and religious levels. And now we have had the Venice meeting, at which we agreed that we can together promote confidence between East and West. We arrived at a common understanding that the processes now under way in the Soviet Union - perestroika, glasnost, and the promotion of democracy, to which the Russian Orthodox Church gives its support and blessing, are creating favourable conditions for international confidence-building. The agreement reached by the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. in principle on the elimination of two missile classes was assessed as the real beginning of a process that both churches welcome as they are calling for complete nuclear disarmament. At the meeting we finally reached accord on nuclear arms. The use of nuclear weapons - and of any other weapons of mass destruction, for that matter - contradicts the fundamental principles of Christian morality and must be condemned. We saw eye to eye on the fact that even the possession of these weapons as a deterrent must be regarded as temporary, and that their owners must be under an obligation to keep reducing these weapons and to eliminate them in the long run.

- Another important point that attracted universal attention was that the Catholic Church insisted, for the first time ever, on the exclusively peaceful use of outer space.

- This is now our common conviction, although the Russian Orthodox Church had taken this stand on the issue from the outset. In Venice the sides reached understanding on the moral need for the peaceful uses of outer space and other media common to mankind. We expressed

HOT SPOT

Our ships in the Gulf

"PLEASE CONVEY MY HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO THE CREW OF THE MINE-SWEEPER ZARYAD AND ITS COMMANDER LIEUTENANT-CAPTAIN V. KOROLYOV FOR HAVING PILOTED THE TANKER MAKHACHKALA THROUGH THE GULF. WE FELT SECURE UNDER THEIR PROTECTION. CAPTAIN OF THE MAKHACHKALA."

Such telegrams come in from Soviet merchant ships returning from the Persian Gulf. Certainly it is true that some of the warships passing through that explosive region fly the Soviet Naval flag. How many Soviet warships are there and of what kinds? There is a mine-sweeper, an escort ship, a destroyer, and a submarine chaser. They are intended for patrol duty to provide protection for vessels sailing in those waters.

The Persian Gulf is littered with mines. The tanker Marshal Chuikov, for instance, hit a mine on May 12. The likelihood of attacks from the air is not to be ruled out. Planes without identification marks have repeatedly circled Soviet ships at low altitudes and made simulated attacks on them. Anonymous gunboats came unacceptably close to our ships and fired on the motorships Sovetskiye Profsoyuzy and Ivan Shepetkov.

Petty officer 2nd class G. Bokayev, a signalman, detected a floating mine directly ahead of him when his mine-sweeper Zaryad was escorting a Soviet merchant ship. Zaryad's mine-disposal team dealt with the danger in minutes. On another occasion, Commander G. Nikitin of the big submarine chaser Sposobny, which was escorting two Soviet vessels, took resolute action to avert danger. On

the hope that the efforts being made to eliminate certain kinds of nuclear weapon would be successful. After all, this is the first step on the road to the elimination of all weapons.

- And now, perhaps a few words about the less well known details of your trip. You did meet with the Pope, didn't you, although the meeting was not provided for by the programme for your mission!

- Yes I did, in the Vatican.

- It is reported that John Paul II received the Moscow Patriarchate's delegation "in a cordial atmosphere." This fact is said to confirm speculation about the Pope's proposed trip to the U.S.S.R. next year.

- We were not scheduled to visit the Vatican, as our programme was limited to attending the Venice conference, so we didn't expect to have an audience with the Pope. But since we travelled by way of Rome, the Catholic Church made arrangements for us to meet with the Pope. He received our delegation on October 17, after the closure of the Conference. The meeting was certainly friendly. We conveyed to the Pope greetings from his Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia. For his part, the Pope asked us to give his respects to the Head of the Russian Orthodox Church. Although fairly brief, the conversation touched on all the problems discussed in Venice, and the Pope expressed his satisfaction at our resolutions. Then we recalled our past meetings and exchanged mementoes.... However, nothing was said on the subject of the Pope visitng the Soviet Union.

- What language did you converse in!

- The Pope spoke in Italian, but he also understands Russian.

a routine trip, the destroyer and minesweeper escorting the tanker Marshal Chuikov (one of three Soviet tankers chartered by Kuwait), were obliged to take repeated action to protect it.

As distinct from NATO's aircraft carriers and missile cruisers, and the cruise-missile carrying atomic-powered submarines which the U.S. is now to add to its naval armada in the Persian Gulf zone, our ships pose no threat to the states situated in the region. Another point of no small importance is that Soviet warships have no permanent bases in the Gulf. They are occasionally called in to escort our ships while cruising in the Indian Ocean.

V. Kocherov,
captain 2nd rank

The burden of debt, the mountain of arms

Can disarmament help promote development? We put this question to participants in the recent UNCTAD seminar held in Moscow.

Luis Echeverria Alvarez, general director of the Centre for Economic and Social Studies of the Third World, and ex-president of Mexico:

With respect to the developing countries, this problem can be formulated in one sentence: the eighties is a lost decade for them. It will not be possible to maintain world peace if this situation continues into the next decade. Between 1980 and 1986 Latin America alone transferred, in the form of profits and interest payments, discounting new credits, a total of 153.8 billion dollars which makes up nearly half its external debt. Last year it spent more than a third of its export earnings paying interest on its foreign debt.

The situation is even more serious in view of the following fact: given the low level of economic ties between them, the developing nations will face economic decline if they do not import certain goods. Their resources for paying the external debt are thus drastically reduced, and this could lead to a lowering of growth rates in the industrialized states.

It has been calculated that, due to the asymmetry of the world's demographic pyramids, the developing states will have to create more than 700 million jobs for their citizens by the end of this century, whereas the industrial states will only have to create a tenth of that number.

I believe this to be one of the major socio-economic and political problems of the contemporary world. It cannot be resolved by means of current approaches to international trade and the distribution of the wealth of nations. It is for this reason that we are demanding a restructuring of the world economy by establishing the new economic order favoured by most U.N. member states.

The total external debt of the developing nations amounts to exactly the sum the world spends on arms. The present situation, characterized by the economic impoverishment of the majority of the world's population (79 per cent of which will live in the developing states by the year 2000), the arms race and regional conflicts, is creating the conditions for nuclear suicide.

Stuart Holland, British MP and a leading Labour Party disarmament and development expert:

It is not easy, to say the least, to persuade an arms manufacturer to spend his money on the requirements of development. Nevertheless, I think that politicians, on whom the fate of the contemporary world depends, are beginning to understand that there is no alternative to ending the arms race. The concept of new political thinking advocated by the Soviet leader, and the political initiatives of the Soviet Union are inspiring us with optimism.

On the other hand, the mountains of arms accumulated in the world and the inflated military budgets lead to such unpredictable consequences as the latest financial crisis. The panic on the money markets should be a lesson to us: the United States must reduce its federal budget deficit. But how is this to be done if no substantial cuts in military spending are envisaged? It is possible, for instance, to raise earnings from trade, by increasing exports and reducing imports. However, such a policy on Washington's part would be detrimental to the interests of the developing countries, especially in Latin America.

Interviewer YURI KUDIMOV

After long winter comes spring

The 13th Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) ended on November 1. In its report, addressed to 46 million party members and the country's billion-strong population, the Central Committee reviewed the party's work over the preceding nine years and outlined measures for China's further development.

GRIGORI ARSLANOV

December 1978 was taken as the point of departure. It was then that the third plenum of the Central Committee was held. Its decisions are associated with "an early spring" in socio-political life after "the long winter" caused by the cultural revolution, the adoption of a course leading to the country's all-round modernization, and the creation of the prerequisites for launching large-scale reforms as an important component of the policy of "building socialism with a specifically Chinese character.

At the initial stage

On behalf of the Central Committee, the report was delivered by acting general secretary Zhao Ziyang, who said that in the nine years since the reforms were started the face of China had changed tremendously and initial steps had been taken to resolve the burning problems that had troubled the working people for many years.

The gross national product and public revenues have almost doubled since 1978, as have the average incomes of working people in town and countryside. The overwhelming majority of the population are today provided with food, clothes and shoes. Most consumer goods, formerly in short supply, are now available to the population. The problem of unemployment is being effectively tackled. The economy has firmly embarked on a course of steady and harmonious development.

All the economic achievements of the past nine years, Zhao Ziyang noted, are inseparable from the comprehensive reforms which have brought about radical changes in the life of Chinese society. The speaker described the current socio-economic changes in the country as "a new revolution."

Referring to the work done by the party over this period, Zhao Ziyang noted that the present situation was characterized by political stability, unity and the extension of the principles of socialist democracy and legality in public life.

The country's present situation and potential are soberly assessed in the report. The Communist Party, Zhao Ziyang noted, has no grounds whatever for complacency. It is still facing "numerous problems and difficulties, even more than expected." The report stressed that the central task of the congress was to ensure a broader readjustment and speedy progress for the country.

Conscious of the problems involved in the building of socialism in a country as large as China, Zhao Ziyang said, the Communist Party has achieved notable success in its pursuit of solutions, but has at the same time suffered not a few failures and paid dearly for them. The main cause of these failures is the loss of contact with reality, the desire to achieve instant successes, and an attempt to expand productive forces by means of extensive political campaigns. As a result, Zhao Ziyang said, "the ossified economic machinery and the excessively centralized political mechanism linked with it have palpably hindered the growth of the productive forces of the socialist commodity economy."

China, the report says, is today at the initial stage of building socialism. This period, beginning with the completion, on the whole, of the socialist transformation of private ownership of the means of production in the 1950s and ending with the completion in the main of the socialist modernization of the country, will last at least 100 years.

The Communist Party prepared thoroughly for its 13th congress. If the third plenum of the Central Committee held in December 1978 is to be regarded as a turning point in the revival of the country, Chinese Communists say, the success of the 13th congress will be a landmark in ensuring political stability and developing socialist China for a long period to come.

What is the distinctive feature of the present time? In the opinion of Chinese Communists, all the measures that helped the revival of the national economy after the long stagnation (the family contract in the countryside and the renunciation of overt wage-levelling) have played their part, and it is now necessary to search for new and more effective measures. Moreover, there has arisen an urgent need for a theoretical explanation of what has been done up to now and should be done in this direction in the future.

The Central Committee's report pays particular attention to questions concerning running of the "planned commodity economy." Three quarters of the country's large state-owned factories are already operating under the contract management system, and nearly half its small state-owned factories have either been leased or are now run by private businessmen under a contract concluded with the state.

The contract system is viewed as "a strategic measure" capable of reviving the work of large factories by ridding them of unwieldy management and other services they can dispense with. Under a contract, all planned quotas are distributed by the manager between shops, teams and individual workers. Those who fulfil the terms of the contract receive wages and bonuses, and those who do not, get lower wages or have to go. The surplus profit belongs to the respective factory.

There are many forms of contract. All of them should help "revive factories" and enhance the interest of personnel in their work. These measures will not, of course, be effective if the reforms leave the political structure intact.

The reform of the political structure was at the centre of attention at the congress. Without it, speakers pointed out, the reform of the economic system will not yield success. The aim of the reforms is to give up the excessive centralization of power, do away with bureaucratic practices, eliminate the remnants of feudalism, and create a political structure with highly advanced democracy and integral public law and order. At the same time, delegates spoke out against "broad democracy," which undermines public stability and the foundations of the state.

The division of functions

The division of functions between the party and government bodies must be the central link of the reforms. The party has to exercise political leadership, define political principles and directions, and make decisions on cardinal issues, including the selection of candidates for top posts in government bodies. All this should be done within the framework of the Constitution and the law.

In the opinion of people who have carefully studied the congress documents, such measures are aimed not at restricting the party's role but at preventing the excesses of the "cultural revolution" and other political campaigns which have done harm to the country, exhausted the party and undermined its prestige.

In line with the course set by the congress, substantial changes will be effected in the system of selection and promotion, with priority to be given to the principle of open competition. The party

organizations will defend and support those who search boldly for new approaches and show initiative and originality.

Much attention was also paid to the discussion of "delicate" issues associated with the democratization of the work not only of local party branches but also of the leading bodies, the Central Committee and its Political Bureau. This would have been inconceivable in the recent past. The congress decided that from now on several candidates should be proposed for election to each seat on the Central Committee and the central commission for verifying compliance with party discipline. It is a first, extremely significant step towards democratization.

The congress strongly denounced nepotism, corruption, bribery, extortion, embezzlement of public property, and the violations of discipline in foreign-policy work that are still observed in the country and "are likely to result in the degradation of the entire party."

It was stated that privately-run businesses could be allowed to operate within certain limits, as they "stimulate the growth of production, employment and the market." Joint ventures - with both Chinese and foreign capital invested in them, founded on the basis of production cooperation, or with only foreign capital invested - were described as bonus to the socialist economy.

With the leading role of public ownership retained and the growth of private ownership permitted, it was stated that socialism must also make use of the capital goods and services market, the issue of stocks and shares, and the integrated unity of planning with market forces.

The property rights of some small publicly-owned enterprises can now be transferred to groups of people or individuals, who will either lease these businesses or pay their cost to the state. Moreover, enterprises can compete with each other. The establishment of the socialist market system provides for a reform of commodity prices. The state should only control the prices of a small proportion of essential goods and services, while prices for most other goods should be determined by the market.

However, the congress stressed, living standards should not be allowed to drop in the course of the reforms. It is necessary to ensure that as production grows living standards rise steadily as well.

Five basic principles

Much attention was given in the report and the subsequent debate to problems involved in the building of "socialism with a specifically Chinese character." The brief review of the international situation and foreign policy made in the report shows that China's positions on the issues of peace and disarmament, international security and cooperation largely coincide with the positions of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

Chinese Communists, Zhao Ziyang declared, welcome the agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles recently achieved in principle between the Soviet Union and the United States, and the perceptible improvement in East-West relations. It must be clearly realized, however, the Chinese leader noted, that this is only a first step towards arms reduction.

China, the report says, will unswervingly continue to pursue an independent and peaceful foreign policy and establish relations of friendship and cooperation with all countries on the five principles of peaceful coexistence. Together with the other peace-loving nations, it will work to ensure that the international situation develops in a direction favourable to all countries and to world peace.

At the congress's press centre Chinese officials spoke of Peking's desire to promote economic and trade cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist states in various forms. It is opportune to recall that the 13th congress coincided with the holding of various events to mark the 70th anniversary of the Great October Revolution. A week-long festival of Soviet films took place in five major cities of the country; a Soviet photographic exhibition was organized in Shanghai; the first performance of Mikhail Shatrov's play "Blue Horses on Red Grass" was held at the Peking Youth Theatre and the Soviet film "War and Peace" was shown on national television. All these events were welcomed by the Chinese public.

At the congress's concluding session the delegates elected 175 full members and 110 alternate members of the Central Committee by secret ballot as well as 69 members of the central commission for verifying compliance with party discipline. Two hundred members of the central commission of the CPC advisers were also elected.

In line with the congress directive urging the election of more younger members to the party leadership, the composition of the Central Committee underwent substantial changes. It no longer includes Deng Xiaoping, Li Xiannian, Chen Yun, Peng Zhen and other famous veterans of the party. The average age of the newly elected Central Committee is 55, four years lower than its previous composition.

At the Central Committee plenum on November 2, Zhao Ziyang was elected general secretary, and Zhao Ziyang, Li Peng, Qiao Shi, Hu Qili and Yao Yilin were elected members of the Permanent Committee of the Central Committee.

The 13th congress is an important landmark in the history of the CPC and a major event in the political life of China. It has defined the main strategic lines of the country's domestic and foreign policies for many years to come.

Peking

Wheat harvesting in the Shandong Province. The considerable expansion of agricultural production in the past few years has enabled China to overcome the acute lack of staple food products.

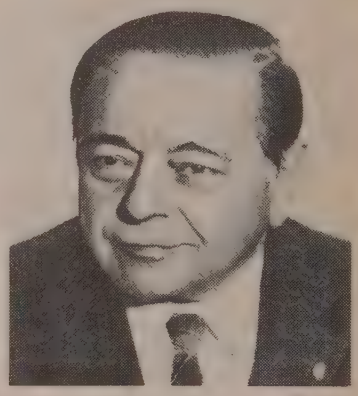
Xinhua-TASS photo

"IDEOLOGICAL DISPUTES AND MUTUAL SECURITY"

Such is the title of a joint document issued by the Academy of Social Sciences under the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (G.D.R.) and the Basic Values Commission of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (F.R.G.).

The document formulates both the views the SUPG and the SPD share and the differences between them on matters of ideology, politics and inter-party relations.

The authors of the document, who have been working on it since 1986, have succeeded in producing a general definition of the character and forms of historical competition between the two socio-political systems at the present juncture and stressed that it can continue only in conditions of peace. While comparing and upholding their parties' fundamental positions and their different approaches to the issues of democracy, human rights and the connection between scientific-technological and social progress, the representatives of the two parties agreed that today it is more necessary than ever to pool efforts for the sake of mankind's survival. The document stresses that Communists and Social Democrats pursue common goals: lasting peace, disarmament and international security. At the same time an attempt has been made to elaborate rules, so to speak, for the political and ideological dispute between the two opposing systems.



Our Berlin correspondent Lev Yeliseyev asked OTTO REINHOLD, a member of the SUPG Central Committee and rector of the SUPG Central Committee's Academy of Social Sciences to comment on the document.

Q.: Comrade Reinhold, to start with, could you outline the basic provisions of the document "Ideological Disputes and Mutual Security"?

A.: This is the first joint document on the key problems of ideology and politics ever to have been drawn up in the history of relations between the SUPG and the SPD.

The document is a product of our awareness of the inexorable fact that mankind is now facing the choice of either surviving together or dying together. Peace can no longer be ensured in a world divided into antagonistic states; it can only be safeguarded by joint efforts.

Over the past few years, the SPD has come by and large to share the stand taken by the CPSU, the SUPG and other Communist parties of the socialist community on matters of peace and security. The views of the F.R.G. Social Democrats coincide, to a considerable extent, with the platform outlined in the communiqué of the Berlin conference of the Warsaw Treaty Organization's Political Consultative Committee.

The SUPG and the SPD proceed from the premise that in the effort to safeguard peace, ideological and political differences must be relegated to the background. The same applies to the contradictions between the two social systems - capitalism and socialism.

From the document of the two parties

...In the nuclear age, war must be excluded from the political arsenal. If unleashed between military blocs possessing nuclear weapons, a war would mean an end to all politics and make all human activity senseless. The consolidation of peace has now become a vital prerequisite for any responsible policy line.

Incompatible with this is any policy aimed at stepping up the arms race, or confrontation imbued with the striving for military supremacy, invulnerability and world hegemony. Such a policy cannot but lead to greater international tension and further jeopardize world peace. It is an imperative of our time, therefore, to achieve a breakthrough in international realtions, work together for a lasting peace, and set our sights on dialogue and disarmament, compromise and balance of interests, cooperation and the revival of détente. The supporters of this line must prevail over all the forces which still believe in the possibility of maintaining security by stockpiling new mountains of arms. Such a breakthrough in international relations is not only necessary, but feasible.

Both systems, all states and nations, want peace, détente, and an end to the arms race.

In increasing numbers, private individuals, organizations, parties, governments and states are taking vigorous action towards this end irrespective of their

However, they exist, and will continue to do so, and antagonisms are inevitable. The document proceeds from the fact that we shall have to live with these contradictions. The problems which can only be solved by joint efforts on the part of the two social systems are growing in number, with the prevention of a thermonuclear holocaust being, unquestionably, the most important problem of all. Nor should protection of the environment, the plight of the developing countries and other problems be neglected.

On the one hand, therefore, cooperation between Communists and Social Democrats in safeguarding peace is of the utmost importance. On the other hand, these parties hold different ideological and political views, and ideological disputes are therefore inevitable. This is why each side has set forth, in a special section, its own approach to the cardinal problems of social progress.

The question is how to make ideological disputes stimulate rather than prejudice the struggle for peace. The sides have reached the conclusion that they should take each other for what they are rather than make stipulations such as "you've got to model yourself on me." First and foremost, it is necessary to rule out all armed forms of antagonism between the two social systems. The two systems should confine themselves to peaceful competition, vying for the greatest contribution towards the solution of the global problems of our time. Ideological disputes should not be extended to interstate relations, and it makes no sense to expect the other side to do what you are not prepared to do yourself. Mutual security can be guaranteed on the sole condition that the sides consider each other capable of conducting a peace policy.

I shall permit myself to cite two quotations on the subject from the document:

"The struggle between the two social systems must proceed exclusively in the form of peaceful competition, i.e, without any voilence being used. Each of the two systems should demonstrate its professed advantages solely by example capable of convincing people both within and beyond its confines.

"The fundamental idea of this competition should therefore be to ascertain which of the two systems contributes the most to the solution of mankind's key problems, provides more favourable social conditions for human development, and gives man greater opportunities to protect his interests, exercise his rights, uphold his values and attain his ideals."

And:

"Discussions on these cardinal points will continue, as will mutual recriminations for all sorts of discrepancies between theory and practice. Disputes over these opposed positions of principle can be stopped neither by compromise formulas, nor by appeals to peaceful intentions. What would be the use of glossing over the contradictions that exist between us? However, disputes on basic issues can become a factor for fruitful competition between the two systems if Communists and Social Democrats alike show respect for the fundamental decisions, denounce the practice of enemy image-building, cease to treat the other side's motives with suspicion, and refrain from deliberately distorting its convictions and defaming its representatives."

Q.: Obviously, the quest for mutually acceptable wording was a difficult one and called for mutual restraint. What were the biggest difficulties the parties came up against when drawing up the document?

A.: One should bear in mind, above all, that each party regarded its own platform as its point of departure and acted on its

social, political, ideological and conceptual differences and contradictions, and their influence is growing appreciably.

Ever more people in both East and West are coming to realize that in this nuclear age of ours lasting world peace and international security can be achieved not through refining the instruments of warfare, but by political means alone. The solution to the problem of attaining worldwide stability and security lies not in efficient weapons, but in efficient politics. Converting awareness of this into practical action will involve resolute efforts by all.

Nowadays we cannot rely on arms stockpiles and confrontation for a durable peace. Today peace can be achieved only by agreement. For this reason a system of mutual and equal security must be created. This makes it necessary for all partners to take account of and respect for the other side's security interests. This is the only way to advance towards a dialogue, towards arms control negotiations, and make concrete peace and disarmament proposals a reality. No side must claim greater security at the other side's expense.

●

While holding largely similar or even identical views on certain issues, the two systems are poles apart on others. The coexistence of two entirely different, even diametrically opposed, socio-economic and political systems, combined with antagonism between them, constitute a characteristic feature of international relations today.

The two social systems can continue to compete only in conditions of peace and further historical development.

●

Both sides have to accept the long-term prospect of living and getting along with one another. Neither side can deny the other the right to existence. We should pin our hopes not on the likelihood of one system being liquidated by the other, but on both systems' having the capacity for reform and on the competition between them stimulating their desire for reforms. Consequently, coexistence and collective security will have no time limits.

●

Collective security will not be achieved if ideological differences assume forms that threaten or contaminate interstate relations, or if they create the impression that conflicts related to the struggle for power are manifestations of an implacable and inevitable antagonism between good and evil.

●

Collective security presupposes denunciation of attempts at direct interference in the practical policy of other states; it calls for peaceful competition between the two systems, a competition that is governed by jointly established rules and of which civilized political discussion, polemics and dialogue are an integral part.

This will be compatible with the peace policy to which the SUPG and the SPD proclaim their commitment.

own political and ideological principles. There was no question of smoothing over contradictions, looking for a "golden mean" or trying to win the other side over. The idea was not to convert Social Democrats to communism, or Communists to social democracy, but to find ways in which the SUPG and the SPD, with all their differences on individual issues, could cooperate in facilitating the solution of today's global problems.

Our social science experts - those of the SUPG and the SPD Basic Values Commission - spent three years giving in-depth discussion to problems of vital importance. The level of confidence attained has enabled us to work out a common approach to many questions - despite, I repeat, our ideological and political differences.

We have discussed thoroughly and at length such subjects as peaceful coexistence today, working for peace, and contemporary anti-communism, dwelt on each side's capacity for conducting a policy of peace, reforms and so on.

Public sentiments in the F.R.G. have of late undergone and continue to undergo important changes. The results of elections and many public opinion polls have furnished ample evidence that the overwhelming majority of people in the F.R.G. seek cooperation rather than confrontation with the Soviet Union, the G.D.R. and other socialist countries, irrespective of what they think about the socialist system. They want the F.R.G. to be a predictable and active force for peace in Europe. The F.R.G.'s ruling bloc cannot but take account of this if it wants to remain in power. Having ignored or underrated this circumstance, the CDU/CSU lost more votes at the last elections than ever in the history of the Federal Republic. The Free Democrats, who take a more ralistic line in this matter, improved their showing considerably. As for the SPD, the document in question will certainly add to its influence in the F.R.G., regardless of whether the party returns to office or remains in opposition. The document largely reflects the sentiments of the general public in the F.R.G.

Q.: The two parties' statement to the effect that both systems are capable of reforms and share the desire to maintain peace in a world saturated with nuclear weapons, nevertheless, led certain Western observers to claim that the joint document smoothed over the ideological differences between Communists and West German Social Democrats. What, in your view, lies behind these assertions?

A.: I repeat, there can be no question of smoothing over ideological differences. On the contrary, the document clearly defines them in a special section. However, certain conservative critics are afraid lest the enemy image they have constructed should crumble. After all, the myth of the "eastern threat" has served for years a point of departure for their actions. The policy of peace pursued by the CPSU, the SUPG and the countries of the socialist community has recently taken the wind out of their sails. And now the SPD has denounced the concept of the "Soviet threat" by signing the joint document with the SUPG. One can imagine how this riles reactionaries.

This largely goes for the definition of the character of the Marxist-Leninist parties. The right often allege that our parties are anti-democratic in principle. The document sets forth in detail our notion of democracy and points out that democracy and humanism have the most important role to play in the competition between the two systems.

And here is another thing I'd like to say about our critics. I think the reaction to the document has come as no surprise to either the SUPG or the SPD. So far, however, they have proved unable to detract from its positive impact.

Q.: Is it not the case that the fact that the SPD is not a ruling party has probably made things easier for it in drawing up the document?

A.: We compared notes on that score with the F.R.G. Social Democrats, and I must say that we adhere to this view, although the SPD representatives pointed out that their present position had had no role to play in this case as the document was a party rather than a state one.

Q.: What is the practical meaning of the document, in your view? What effect can it have on realtions between Communist and Social Democratic parties?

A.: The document reflects the viewpoint of the SUPG and the SPD and will have a positive effect on relations between them. At the same time, it contains provisions and conclusions whose relevance goes beyond these two parties. In fact, it is a call to denounce all forms of anti-communism, which contaminates relations between Social Democrats and Communists everywhere. The view that ideological disputes should be conducted in such a way as not to complicate, and even, in the long run, frustrate the joint effort for peace is not a monopoly of our two parties.

The SUPG maintains good relations with most parties in the Socialist International. I understand that our document has had its close attention and won its approval. This gives us grounds to hope that the impact of the document will extend beyond relations between the SPD and the SUPG.

Berlin

This and other pressing issues were discussed at the second national conference of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

The reports delivered by PDPA General Secretary Najibullah and other Party and government leaders, the speeches by delegates, and the documents adopted by the conference give an objective idea of the present complex situation in Afghanistan. The participants in the forum took a sober and critical view of their activity, without glossing over their mistakes, aware that a frank and honest confession is the best guarantee that lessons will be drawn from the past.

The initial results

The bold policy of reconciliation has, indeed, stirred up the whole nation and is now yielding the first favourable results. Those who only yesterday terrorized the population, committing murders and acts of sabotage, are going over to the government - as many as 30,000 from 184 armed groups. Despite the obstacles put in their way, some 90,000 people have returned home from Pakistan and Iran. The number of villages under government control has risen to 8,500 - more than a third of the country's total, and two provinces, Farah and Neemroze, have been rid almost entirely of counterrevolutionary bands to become zones of peace. Many erstwhile rebels and refugees have been elected to local government bodies or become members of reconciliation commissions at various levels. The coalition government is beginning to take shape from below - in villages and rural districts.

The national economy is developing even in the face of the undeclared but real and ruthless war. The prerevolutionary level has been exceeded in the main fields and the gross national product is increasing, though hit-and-run attacks by counterrevolutionaries are still causing great damage to the economy.

It is noteworthy that the policy of national reconciliation has already had a favourable effect by helping revive the economy and increase the rate of industrial growth.

In agriculture progress has so far been negligible. The rate of progressive reform has fallen off. Through the fault of the bodies set up to carry out the land and water reform, nearly 340,000 peasants allotted land after the national democratic revolution have not yet been provided with adequate water. All this is certainly retarding the expansion of the social base of people's government.

It has not been easy to put the policy of reconciliation into effect. In reply to Kabul's policy of peace and national

OBSTACLES TO RECONCILIATION

concord, the extremist counterrevolutionary groups backed and armed by Washington - the so-called alliance of seven in Peshawar - have intensified their attacks, both military and political, against Afghanistan.

The internal situation has also become more complex. The need to reach compromise with the opposition and even overtly hostile forces and to make concessions in the interests of national concord has led to confusion among Party and government officials.

Nevertheless, the PDPA, being, as its revised Rules say, a revolutionary democratic party, is determined to give a new impulse to the reconciliation process, intensifying it and extending it to the entire territory of the republic. For this purpose essential changes are to be introduced in the country's political system. It is planned to legalize other parties, provided they are fighting or will fight for national concord and the welfare of the people, and to form a coalition government with those who have adopted or are going to adopt patriotic positions and accept the policy of national reconciliation. The PDPA does not intend to relinquish power. It is prepared merely to give up its monopoly on power in order to make it more representative at various levels.

The character and essence of a new political system, the Kabul forum pointed out, should be determined not by a narrow Party approach but by the real alignment of political and class forces in the country, and the common desire of the people for peace. A new system is soon to be formalized in a new constitution.

Vow to strengthen unity

The need for radical changes in Party work and a realistic approach to the new conditions emerging in the process of national reconciliation determined the character of the amendments introduced by the conference to the Rules and action programme of the People's Democratic Party. Slogans that forestall events or are incomprehensible to the people as well as statements that oversimplify problems have been deleted from the revised programme.

Bureaucratic tendencies and a discrepancy between words and actions were criticized when the work of Party and government bodies was discussed. It was noted at the conference that the armed forces of the republic had not been adequately strengthened, far from all army units being able successfully to withstand the enemy on their own.

Special attention was naturally devoted to building up the Party. The PDPA is growing numerically. Today it has a membership of 185,000, with almost 40,000 new members since the policy of national reconciliation was proclaimed.

But how is Afghanistan to survive the ordeals of the present time, overcome the numerous obstacles arising in the way of national reconciliation, and achieve its ultimate goal? The resolution "On urgent tasks of strengthening PDPA unity in the context of the struggle for national reconciliation," approved not by the usual show of hands or even by individual voting, but by each delegate affixing his or her signature to it, shows that "there can be only one answer."

What answer? "The PDPA," the resolution says, "must ensure the cohesion, monolithic unity and militancy of its ranks. If the Party fails to achieve this today, it will lose its dominant role in society and be ousted from political life by other forces." Hence the primary task is "drastically to eradicate factionalism, which has for some years been eroding Party unity and undermining Party discipline."

It is believed in the Party that factionalism is explained by the pressure of petty-bourgeois ideology, which has made itself felt since the PDPA was formed. The bitter rivalry, and the struggle for supremacy between various groups and leaders led in 1967 to the split of the Party into two wings - Halk (The People) and Parcham (The Banner).

"The struggle between these wings," the resolution bitterly concludes, "has done as much harm to the PDPA as that caused by its overt enemies. Today, too," the resolution goes on, "the Party is being torn by the factional activity of Halkists, Parchamists, opponents of the course set by the 18th Central Committee plenum, who use the name of Babrak Karmal as a cover, and by various manifestations of nationalism, tribal affiliation and factionalism."

Only by ensuring the complete unity of its ranks can the PDPA develop and work as the organizing, mobilizing and cementing force in Afghan society, the resolution stresses.

The resolution on strengthening Party unity, signed by each delegate, is not simply a general document of the conference, naturally binding on all members. It is also an oath of fidelity to the PDPA's cause, a pledge to strengthen the ranks of the Party and hence its militancy. The conference urged all honest Party members to sign this pledge.

"Unity today or political death tomorrow" - is how the question is posed in the resolution.

The guarantee that the PDPA will be able to rid itself of alien elements and establish itself as a political party lies in no small degree in the ability to face up to stern reality.

The party of Afghan revolutionary democrats sees its main task today in working, together with the entire people, to bring peace to the nation.

ALEXANDER USVATOV

The revolution gave land to the Afghan peasant. What he needs now is peace.
TASS photo

My meeting with Astrid Lindgren

There are books that we read in childhood and never throw away. From time to time we take them off the shelf, reread them, and then pass them on to our children. But one day, usually when we are much older, we find that these stories were written by a person just like ourselves. And we find this hard to believe, because we always thought story-tellers came from another planet and that we could never meet them.

Astrid Lindgren does not live on a distant planet, but in Sweden. You can visit her, be entertained with a new story, and wish her a very Happy Birthday - for on November 14 she was 80 (though for a good fairy that is no age). I was lucky enough to meet her in Moscow when she arrived for a short visit, and to extend my congratulations on another event. She is one of the first writers to be honoured with a Leo Tolstoy Medal, a well-deserved award for her profoundly humanist books for children. Later she told me how the idea for her stories originated.

One day she returned home to find everything topsy-turvy. "Surely that couldn't have been my daughter's doing?" Astrid thought, and went to find out. "What happened?" she asked. "Uncle Liljonkvast flew in to see me and we played together," replied the girl. She went on to explain that she had been bored lying in bed doing nothing (she was in bed because she was ill - so no school), when all of a sudden a dwarf flew in through her window and suggested that they play together. Naturally, she was only too happy and brought out all her toys.

The incident sparked off the stories about "Karlsson Who Lives on the Roof." It's true that the author changed his name - probably to make it easier to remember. They say that the mysterious "Liljonkvast" does mean something. But I can assure you that that is not so - the author herself says that in Swedish it is just a meaningless jumble of letters.

With a new name the dwarf also acquired a new character. No longer was he a good boy all the time. He played tricks and encouraged the child to be mischievous. He scared night robbers and dressed up as a ghost. "And," added Astrid Lindgren, "if he was like that I couldn't change him." Many critics accused the writer of not having a single model of good behaviour in her books. None had the traditional nobility or honesty of fairy-tale characters. One professor found it reprehensible that the heroine of the story "Pippi-Long Stocking" ate a whole cake herself. What an example for children! Such bad manners. But, as the writer pointed out to the professor, if Pippi can lift a horse on her own then of course she can eat a whole cake. I don't suppose you will find a single person in the world familiar with Astrid Lindgren's books who would say that her stories do not teach children kindness and affection.

She has, of course, her own favourite writers of books for children. And if you look at their characters, none can be described as goody-goodies - all are full of mischief, all love adventures - and not to save a princess, but just for the fun of it. All have their share of curiosity. Her favourite author is Barbara Lindgren - that they share a common surname is just coincidence. And since she likes mischief-makers, naturally A.A. Milne's Winnie-the-Pooh is one of her favourites.

Incidentally, her favourite of her own characters is not Karlsson who lives on the roof, but Emil from "The Adventures of Emil of Lönnebergi." Astrid Lindgren was surprised to learn how popular Karlsson was in the Soviet Union. Perhaps, she suggested, it's because he resembles the heroes of Russian fairy stories?... Although of course she still loves her Karlsson, he still holds a place in her heart. Incidentally, literary critics in Sweden spared Karlsson.

A children's writer is a very special person, living in a world of her own. I asked where she finds the subjects for her books. All around me, she replied, in practically everything and any incident. All you need is a little imagination and to look around you more closely.

Children know of Astrid Lindgren from her books. But she is also prominent in public life. She has come out strongly against the use of chemicals in agriculture. She is also well known for her campaigns in defence of domestic animals, as she believes some are not properly cared for.

As I represent a political magazine, I was naturally unable to refrain from asking our Swedish guest about her views on our country and in particular about the changes taking place here. "I like the presenet policy of your government," she replied. "But most of all I like your drive against alcoholism. I wish you every success in your efforts."

... I remember that when as a child I read Astrid Lindgren's books I never thought of them as fantasies. That is very much to the author's credit. Stories for children transcend all frontiers as the concepts of kindness and justice are the same the world over. In our practical age dreaming has gone out of fashion, and we have almost forgotten that dreaming is a human trait.

OLEG OSIPOV

Drawing by N. Shcherbakov

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"Defence of Petrograd,"
by Alexander Deineka. 1928.

THEME
REVOLUTION
ART

The obelisk
"Soviet Constitution,"
by Nikolai Andreyev and
Dmitry Osipov. 1918-19.

The plate "Red Ribbon,"
by Sergei Chekhonin. 1919.

The Communists are carrying on their fight.

Alfred La Piccirella
(Italy)

A demonstration of protest in Dublin.

I. Ponomaryov (U.S.S.R.)

"We are a proud nation."

Osvaldo Salas (Cuba)

INTERNATIONAL CONTEST

MAN AND MANKIND

ИНДЕКС 70622 НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ